



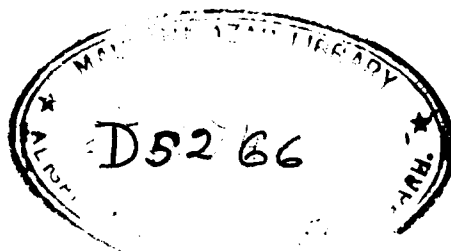
A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE HISTORICAL INFORMATION
IN ZIKR-I-MIR

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE
OF
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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Under the supervision of
Professor K. A. NIZAMI

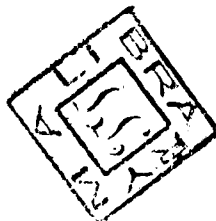
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....

INTRODUCTION

The subject of the present dissertation is 'a critical study of the historical information in Zikr-i Mir'. Zikr-i-Mir is an autobiography of Mir Taqi Mir, the renowned urdu poet whose nom de plume was Mir. He was born at Akbarabad in 1724 A.D. His ancestors had migrated from Hejaz and settled at Akbarabad. His father Muhammad Mutaqqi was a mystic and spent much of his time in ascetic exercises. He died when Mir was only eleven years old, leaving no patrimony to his son. Thus Mir was left on his own at this tender age, to face the world; Zikr-i Mir is a narrative of Mir's own experiences from the time of his father's death to the establishment of his reputation as a poet; and ~~then~~ it narrates the story of the decline of the Mughal Empire over a period of forty years - from 1748 to 1788 - in which Mir has given occasional references to the way in which the course of events effected his own fortunes.

The first part of the book, covering a period of nearly ten year's is devoted largely to descriptions about his father, his young disciple Amanullah, whom Mir called 'uncle' and other companions interested in mysticism.

It seems that the teachings of his father and talks with his associates had created an everlasting, impact on his mind and it is abundantly clear that their teachings made a life-long impression upon him. He has recorded his vivid memories of the things they said to him or to others in his presence. He developed a keen interest in mysticism, particularly his father's stress on all pervading force of love appealed him most. His father emphasised that love was the supreme force in the universe.¹ Though Mir revered the mystics, he did not like those who had withdrawn from the world to live in solitude.² He refers to an incident how his father had chided a disciple of his, Amanullah, for his secluded life in a room for a period of one year, completely cut off from the society and company of relations and friends. He urged him to come out and live in the midst of people.³

1. Zikr, pp.5-6.

چوں دماغش میر سید میگفت کہ اے پسر عشق بود
عشق است کہ دریں کارخانہ متصرف است اگر عشق نمی بود
نظم کل صورت نمی بست بے عشق ز زندگانی وبال است
بے عشق نباید بود بے عشق نباید زیست
پیغمبر کنعانی عشق پسر دارد

2. Ralph Russel and Khurshidul Islam, Three Mughal Poets, p. 209.

3. Zikr, p. 19.

The second half of the book covers about a period of forty years from 1748 to 1788 A.D. in which Mir has recorded most of the important historical events of the period starting from the first invasion of Ahmed Shah Abdali to the blinding of Shah Alam by Ghulam Qadir Khan in 1788. It is interesting to note that three volumes of Sir J.N. Sarkar's Fall of the Mughal Empire cover exactly the same period.

Zikr-i Mir was compiled in the court of Asaf-ud-daula, started in 1771 and brought to completion in 1782 A.D. and Mir died in 1810 A.D. at Lucknow. Thus the last years of his life were spent in Lucknow.

For a long time Zikr-i Mir remained in a limbo of oblivion till at last Anjuman-Taraqqi-i Urdu, Aurangabad published it for the first time in 1929. But even after its publication it was regarded as a literary masterpiece and was received with great approbation by the literary critics. It was for the first time pointed out by Khwaja Ahmad Farooqui in 1957 in his book, Mir Ki Hayat aur - Shaiyri, the Zikr-i Mir had other aspects too, besides being a literary work of high standard. It could be utilized by historians as a source for historical information of the period in which Mir lived.

A number of writers and historians have worked on various aspects of the history of eighteenth century but the present work was taken up not as an addition to the already existing historical literature but to give a new turn to the thinking of students of history of the period. Not only official and unofficial records from a major source of historical information but autobiographies and literary masterpieces are also useful in understanding of events and changes. Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his Fall of the Mughal Empire has used Zikr-i-Mir as a source for historical information but not very exhaustively as in all the three volumes he has referred to it just once.

The latest work on this subject is Atharveen-Sadi Mein Hindustani Masrat or Mir Ka Ahad by Dr. Muhammad Umar. He has dealt with the political, social and economic history of Northern India during eighteenth century but in this work also Zikr has not been used as the main source, rather the information has been gathered from many other sources and no critical estimation of Zikr-i Mir has been attempted. It has been used to show that the poet was well-informed about the political upheavals taking place round him in Northern India.

Similarly Prof. K.A. Farooqui in his literary work 'Mir Ki Hayat Aur Shaiyri' published in 1957, has devoted a section of the book to the historical informations in Zikr-i-Mir and has reproduced the information given by Mir without pointing out whether the information is authentic or not. No comparison with the other contemporary sources has been attempted.

'Three Mughal Poets' of Ralph Russel and Khurshid-ul-Islam is another recent work in which information from Zikr-i-Mir has been utilized but the work mainly deals with the literary achievements of the poet and most of the incidents given in Zikr-i-Mir which focuss on social life of people have been analysed. Mir's life was one of long misery and sufferings. He witnessed the ruin of Delhi at the hands of Abdalis and Marathas for which, he has lamented several times in his autobiography and these events definitely had a direct effect on his poetry, which is full of pathos.

In the present work a humble attempt has been made to arrange the information supplied by Zikr-i Mir in a chronological order with the help of other contemporary and secondary sources. Not one date for any event referred to, in Zikr-i-Mir has been given by Mir. But at

the same time the events have been so co-related that by comparing the events with other records accurate dates can be determined. For instance Mir has neither given the date of his departure to Lucknow nor the date of Mirza Najaf Khan's death but has simply stated that he had heard of Mirza Najaf Khan's death when he reached Awadh. And according to Khairuddin Illahabadi author of Ibratnama, Mirza Najaf died in 1781. Thus it shows that Mir must have gone to Lucknow in 1781. Thus the difficulty of finding the dates for important battles and important events have been removed with the aid of diverse contemporary records.

Secondly, most of the time Mir has indulged in lavish and vivid descriptions of the important battles, but has omitted the names of the battles and sieges. These have been investigated and found out in other contemporary records of the period. For example, the seige of Sukkhartal, has been described at length without revealing the date and the name of the place. This has also been identified. A number of such instances are found in the entire autobiography. Though Mir has given a list of petty zamindars, rajas, chiefs and nobles yet

many a times he has referred to some important personalities as a person or has addressed them according to their post. Besides this, sometimes Mir has mis-spelt some names of the nobles, for example for Kesari Singh he has written Kheri Singh but such instances are very few.

In the present dissertation the first chapter deals with the life and works of Mir. The life sketch though mainly drawn from Zikr-i-Mir is completed with the help of his other literary works. In Zikr nothing has been said about his works, except that he has referred to himself as being a famous poet. A brief outline of the works of Mir has been given in this chapter.

The second chapter deals with the historical, literary and autobiographical importance of the book. As has already been argued that Zikr fits into the pattern of historical writing of the period, moreover a complete analysis of the book brings to light the historical information of the period it deals with, the clear picture of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century and the causes of the decline of the Mughal Empire. The style is simple and poignant. It is more a political diary.

In the third chapter a complete analysis of the political events as recorded in Zikr-i Mir has been attempted. The sequence of events has been arranged chronologically and suitable headings have been added to them. Necessary additional information collected from the available data has been put in the foot-notes to supplement and substantiate the bare facts recorded by Mir in his diary. Such informations have made the picture of events complete. At some places Mir has only mentioned an event, however important, without caring to give the details of the event. For instance, referring to the Murder of Amir Khan he only says that he was killed at the hands of his own servant. Neither has he analysed the causes of the murder, nor has he assessed the consequences of the event which were far-reaching. In this connection also an attempt has been made to discuss the drama and its result on the politics of the imperial court.

The fourth chapter deals with the autobiographies of the nobles and zamindars referred to by Mir. He has given meagre information about them with the exception of a few persons who were his patrons. A long list of the nobles has been prepared and a brief life sketch of each

has been written to assess the role of the nobility in the process of disintegration of the Mughal Empire.

The fifth chapter deals with the social and cultural History of the period as depicted in Zikr-i-Mir. Like most of the contemporary poets and writers, Mir is concerned with the life-styles and manners and social habits of the elite class. He has no idea about the ways and customs of the poor masses with whom he never came into contact. Even the information pertaining to the social and cultural ^{life} of the nobles is so scanty and scattered that no connected account of its various aspects can be made on that basis.

Source Material:

1. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin by Ghulam Hussain Khan. It is a comprehensive history of India from 1118 A.H. to 1194 A.H./ 1706-1780 A.D. covering exactly the same period with which ^{as} Zikr-i-Mir. For comparing the political facts, immense help has been taken from this valuable work.
2. Imad-ud-Saadat by Mir Ghulam Ali. The work is a connected history of the nawabs of Awadh, from Saadat

Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk to Saadat Ali Khan, the fifth ruler of the dynasty. It was at Baille's suggestion that he wrote the work in 1808. The book contains important details relating to the affairs of the Marathas, invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Rohillas and Sikhs, and it is this part which has been utilized to supplement the informations given by Mir. Besides, short biographical account of the important nobles, governors and chieftains of the period has been utilized in preparing the biographies of the nobles referred to in Zikr-i-Mir.

3. Ma'asir-ul-Umara by Samsam-ud-daula Shahnawaz Khan. It is a biographical dictionary of Mughal peerage. It has been immensely used in the present dissertation for constructing the biographies of the nobles.
4. Khazana-i-Amirah by Ghulam Ali Azad. This is a contemporary work completed in about 1763. The main work is devoted to short notices of well known poets and contemporary historical personages. The accounts of Abul Mansur Khan Safdarjang, Alamgir II, Shah Alam II and Marathas and the invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali upto 1762 have been quite helpful in discussing

political issues and events referred to but inadequately treated in his autobiography by Mir.

5. Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi—Anonymous. It contains a detailed account of the reigns of Ahmad Shah to Alamgir II. It is useful for details regarding the court politics and conflicts between Safdarjang and the Emperor. And it is this portion of the work which has been utilized in my dissertation to add further information to the details supplied by Mir on these topics.
6. Chahar-Gulzar-i-Shujai - It is a comprehensive work written by Harcharandas and is particularly useful for the history of the Later Mughals from Muhammad Shah to Alamgir II. The account of Shuja-ud-daula, to whom the work had been dedicated, is more lengthy and valuable. The new facts available in this work have been incorporated to fill necessary gaps left out by Mir.
7. Tarikh-i-Muzaffari by Muhammad Ali Khan, It was completed in 1800 A.D. and ^{named} ~~named~~ after the author's patron Muhammad Raza Khan Muzaffar Jang Naib-nazim

of Bengal. It is a general history of Mughal Empire upto 1779 A.D. There is to be found quite a lot of similarity in the description of the events, with those given in Siyar, but it is an important and original source on Ahmad Shah's reign. In the present work, most of its help is taken in the portion dealing with the events in Ahmad Shah's reign. Even the dates of the events have been considered from source.

8. Sarguzasht Nawab Najib-ud-daula by Muhammad Abdus Salam. It is more like a Monograph on Najib-ud-daula but it deals with the contest between Safdarjang and Imad-ul-Mulk, rather, the contest for power between Imad-ul-Mulk and Safdarjang is discussed. The battle of Panipat is described as Najib-ud-daula had an outstanding role in the battle. Then the regency of Najib-ud-daula has been dealt with. Mir has also given a good account of Najib-ud-daula's regency, so it is this portion which has been utilized to examine the authenticity of the statements as given by Mir. The informations have also been taken to prepare the biography of Najib-ud-daula.

9. Waqai-Abdul Qadir Khan by Abdul Qadir Rampuri. It deals with the rise and fall of the Rohilla Ghulam Qadir Khan. It contains a vivid description of the treachery of Ghulam Qadir towards the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II and the atrocities he inflicted on the Emperor and his family inside the fort.

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CHAPTER - I
MIR TAQI MIR
His Life And Works

Mir Muhammad Taqi whose nom de guerre is Mir and who is generally known as Mir Taqi, was born at Akbarabad, in 1724 A.D. in a respectable family which had migrated from Hejaz and settled at Ahmedabad.¹

Mir's father Mir Muhammad Ali had settled at Akbarabad. He believed in a life of penitence and poverty and spent much of his time in spiritual exercises. He died in 1735 A.D. leaving no patrimony to his eleven year old son. Thus Mir was left on his own from that tender age and he had to bear the hardships of life from his youth.

Mir received his early education under Syed Amanullah, a young disciple of his father. But he could not continue long under him. Soon after his father's death he left Agra in search of employment and² for a time stayed with his uncle Sirajuddin Khan Arzu, the celebrated Persian poet, who supported and supervised his education. Later on

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1. Mir Taqi Mir: Zikr-i Mir, ed. by Maulvi Abdul Haque, p. 3.
 2. Mir is quite bitter about him in his autobiography. His narration shows that it was much against his self respect that he lived with his uncle. Ibid., p. 63.

he learnt ¹Rekhta under Syed Saadat Ali. ²Mir worked hard to perfect his style and in no time he came to be counted among the leading poets of the time. His verses gained such popularity that they could be heard being recited in every nook and corner of the streets. ³

In the meantime, events took a new turn and his uncle's attitude forced him to leave the house. While thus wandering aimlessly he came across one Alim Ullah ⁴ who introduced him to Riayat Khan. ⁵ This introduction proved a boon for Mir, for soon afterwards he got an employment under him and financial difficulties, for the time being, were solved.

Mir had an overwhelming sense of self-respect and was proud and sensitive by nature which compelled him to lead the life of a destitute as it is obvious from his

1. Zikr, p. 67.

2. He was a native of Amroha, Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. Mir does not gives any details about Alim Ullah except that he was the one who introduced him to Riayat Khan.

5. He was the uterine brother of Muhammad Amin Khan. During the time when Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah went to settle Malwa, he accompanied him and was raised to the rank of 5000/5000 and granted the title of Zahir-ud-daula and appointed governor of Malwa. Shahnawaz Khan, Mathir-ul-Umara, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. I, p. 488.

own account. Administrative chaos in the Mughal Empire and growing economic distress also contributed to his misfortune and Mir was reduced to a state of abject penury.

Mir gives a vivid account of his stay at different courts, and his association with a number of nobles, in search of employment. During the course of his narrative, he refers to some of the historical events of his time which had at least some effect on his career.

After his father's death he was left with none to support him or to guide him. He laments -- "I saw the tyranny of heavens and bore the hardships of life, but no, the heavens or the world is not responsible for my misfortunes, it was my fate, my stars which are responsible (for my misfortunes).¹" He writes, despite all the hardships that he had to face, he maintained his self-respect and did not succumb to any temptation of material comfort at the cost of his dignity. He went out in search of employment throughout Agra but in vain. He then left for Shahjahanabad (Delhi). But here too he had to wait for

1. Zikr, p. 61.

quite sometime before he succeeded in winning the ear of nobleman, Khwaja Muhammad Basit,¹ the nephew of the great noble, Samsam-ud-daula. Samsam-ud-daula at that time was holding the highest offices in the empire --- that of Mir-Bakshi and Amir-ul-Umara. He knew Mir's father and had respect for his memory. He ordered that a daily stipend of rupee one be paid to Mir from his treasury.² During the interview, an incident occurred which further impressed Samsam-ud-daula in his favour. Mir asked that the order for payment of his stipend be put in writing, so that no difficulty arose when he went to receive it. Khwaja Muhammad Basit, thinking perhaps that this down to earth request might offend Samsam-ud-daula, intervened and said,³ "This is not the time for inkstand." (meaning thereby that this was not the time for writing). Mir smiled at this remark. Samsam-ud-daula looked at him in astonishment and asked: "What is the matter? why are you laughing? Mir replied, "I do not know what that means -- 'this is not the proper time for inkstand.' If he had said: 'the Nawab cannot sign now or the inkstand bearer is not here, then I

1. خواجه محمد باسط که برادرزاده صمصام الدوله اميرالامرا بود عنايت به حال من کرد و پيش نواب برد.

Ibid., p. 62.

2. Ibid.,

3. وقت قلم داں نيست , ibid., p. 63.

could have understood it. But this is a curious statement. The inkstand is not a living thing that it can observe times and occasions, it is a piece of wood which any of your servants can fetch whenever you order him.' At this Samsam-ud-daula laughed and made the order then and there.¹

Mir's good fortunes did not last long. About a year after this incident in 1739 A.D. came the invasion of Nadir Shah and Samsam-ud-daula was mortally wounded in the battle. Mir's stipend was discontinued and once more he had to set out in search of employment. His biography does not give any date of his return to Agra; and here, he soon had more bitter experiences to undergo. He says that all his relatives and friends turned against him. "Men who had once made the dust of my feet, the adornment of their eyes, "made his life so unbearable that he felt obliged to leave the city and go once more to Delhi.²

Mir stayed for a while with his step brother Muhammad Hasan's uncle, Khan-e-Arzu, but one day a letter from Muhammad Hasan came condemning Mir roundly and asking

1. Ibid., pp. 62-63.

2. کسانیکہ پیش درویش خاک پائے مرا کل بصری ساختند، یکبار از نظرم
انداختند، ناچار بار دیگر بدھلی رسیدم۔
Ibid., p. 63.

Khan-e-Arzu not to assist him in any way. Mir writes sarcastically that the old gentleman was one for whom considerations of worldly wisdom were paramount, and for this reason he acted on his nephews' request. "I never asked him for anything," writes Mir, "but still he persecuted me and if I were to write of all I suffered at his hands it would fill a book."¹ It can safely be asserted that these incidents greatly effected Mir and made him a cynic, the condition of which he had described in his autobiography.² But later, when he recovered from the shock, he depended for his livelihood, on his reputation as a poet. Most of his patrons were nobles, highly placed in the imperial administration.

The first patron was Riayat Khan who was the nephew of Imad-ud-daula Qamar-ud-din Khan, the vazir of the empire from 1724 A.D. - 1748 A.D. Mir was introduced to him through a person named Alim Ullah Khan. For a time he served under Riayat Khan. Mir describes how he accompanied him on two campaigns in 1748 A.D., where he undertook a diplomatic mission of some importance on his behalf.³

1. Zikr, p. 64. قصہ او اگر بہ تفصیل بیان کردہ آید دفتر جہانگاہ می باید

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 62-63.

Soon afterwards he won the patronage of Javed Khan,¹ who was all powerful in the empire (from 1748 A.D.- 1752 AD) till he was assassinated by his rival Safdarjang.² Mir was once more left on his own. But soon he came under the wing of Mahanarayan, the diwan of the yazir. He observes that Mahanarayan sent some cash through his Darogah-i Diwan khana, Mir Najm-ud-din Ali 'Salam' son of Sharaf-ud-din Ali 'Payam',³ and invited him with respect and honour. Thus for a time Mir was able to live in peace.

After the downfall of Safdarjang he found himself again in difficulties. It seems that for some years after this he was without any regular means of livelihood, until about 1757 A.D. - 1758 A.D., when Raja Nagarmal, who later on became the deputy yazir of the empire, became his patron. Except for a short break in 1760 A.D., Mir continued in his service for about fifteen years.

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1. Javed Khan was the Khwaja Sarai during the reign of Muhammad Shah. He was created a 6-hazari in Ahmed Shah's reign and all the real power passed in his hands, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 337.
 2. His name was Muhammad Muqim and he was the sister's son of Burhan-ul-Mulk. His father had the title of Shujaat Khan. After the death of his father-in-law he was appointed the governor of Awadh by Muhammad Shah. He died in 1754 A.D. Maathir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, pp.137-40.
 3. Zikr, p. 72.

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In 1756 Raja Jugul Kishore who had been the yakil of Bengal during Muhammad Shah's reign, invited him to make a few corrections in his compositions. Mir asserts that one day he complained about his employment to Raja Jufal Kishore. The Raja was greatly embarrassed as he was not in a position to employ him. But he went to Raja Nagar Mal for his sake. Raja Nagar Mal showed great concern and employed Mir. So from now on Mir stayed for about fifteen years under Nagar Mal's patronage.

The fact that Mir lived for fifteen years under Nagar Mal's patronage is the best testimony to his good opinion about ¹Nagarmal. But not withstanding all this, Mir was prepared to sever relations even with him when honour and self-respect seemed to demand it. The break came in 1772, when the titular Emperor Shah Alam, who had fled from Delhi thirteen years earlier in order to escape from the clutches of Imad-ul-Mulk and had ever since been a virtual captive -- first of the ruler of Awadh later of the British -- decided to assert his right to return to the capital. Raja Nagar Mal, who had been living since 1761 in the Jat kingdom heard of this and sent Mir to smooth the way for him to join the imperial court.² This mission was

1. Ralph Russel and Khursheed-ul-Islam, Three Mughal Poets, p.240.

2. Zikr, p. 121.

successfully performed by Mir but immediately after his return Raja Nagar Mal changed his mind and decided to throw his lot with the Marathas, who had already occupied Delhi. Mir felt deeply humiliated and though he accompanied Nagar Mal on his journey to Delhi, as soon as he got there he installed his wife and children in a suburb called Arabsarai, and then parted company with him forever.

Patronage was to medieval society the normal, accepted way of providing for the learning and culture and the relationship between the poet and his patron was, like every other medieval relationship, prescribed by long usage. Nothing in it sanctioned anything in the nature of censorship. Great nobles often welcomed the opportunity to become patrons of famous poets, for their social prestige would be enhanced. Most of Mir's patrons were nobles of high order. Besides this his autobiography shows that he enjoyed the patronage not only of his co-religionists, but also, of other religions. Raja Jugal Kishore, Raja Nagarmal and Mahanarayan (Diwan of vazir) were some of his patrons. Mir is full of praise for them. Any ending of the relationship between them was generally due to the abrupt changes of fortune, which often deprived a patron of the means to pay the poets' stipend. Thus it would not be an exaggeration to say that in the domain of art and

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culture communal harmony reigned supreme during the eighteenth century. Just as the patrons revered and honoured the artists, so did the artists respected their patrons irrespective of their caste or creed.

After his break with Nagar Mal, Mir had to bear great hardships and his autobiography shows to what straits he had been reduced. For a while another noble less wealthy than Nagar Mal made such provisions for him as he could, but a sudden change of political fortune, deprived his new patron of his sources of income and Mir was left forlorn and destitute. His autobiography says bluntly -- "I went out begging, calling at the door of every man of standing in the Emperor's camp; and because of my fame as a poet I¹ was able to live somehow as a cat or a dog might live."

Mir could hold no longer and for sometime led the life of a recluse but fortunately for him, Wazir-ul Mumalik Asaf²ud-daula thought of having him in his service. Nawab Salarjang, son of Ishaq Khan Mutamin-ud-daula suggested that if he was granted some substinence, he would surely² join his court. Mir, started immediately for Lucknow, first

1. Zikr, p. 122.

2. Continued on next page.....

he met Salarjang, who welcomed him and after a few days he was introduced to Asaf-ud-daula, who enrolled him in his court and from then on till his death¹ (1810 A.D.), Mir lived on his subsistence.

Thus the life sketch of Mir clearly reflects the miseries and hardships he bore throughout his life and it was these hardships which played a great role in moulding the personality of Mir. He was over-weighed with an inordinate sense of self-respect. His nomadic life periodically was due to this feeling which tormented him. It was his sense of self-respect which compelled him to leave the employment of his patrons one after the other. However, it would be unwarranted to hold his nature obly responsible for this, the political and economic factors were also responsible for the frequent ups and downs in his life.

Continued from previous page

2. According to Azad he left Delhi for Lucknow in 1190 AH (1776 A.D.) but according to Lutf it was in 1197 A.H. (1783 A.D.). Garcin de Tassy follows Lutf, and Sprenger also says that it was 1196 A.H. Hsasan says in Tazkirah that Mir was in Delhi at the compilation of the biography (1194 A.H. or 1780 A.D.) vide R.B. Saxena, History of Urdu Literature, P. 70-71
1. There is a controversy regarding the age of Mir. According to Azad (Aab-i Hayat) he attained the age of one hundred years (lunar); according to Jahan, Mir was only eighty. The modern writers like K.A. Farooqi estimate it to be ninety years. Mir Taqi Mir Hayat aur Sha'iri, P. 260

Works of Mir

Mir occupies a very outstanding place in the realm of Urdu literature. He is popularly called 'Khuda-e-Sukhan', on account of his pre-eminent literary position. Urdu poetry is popularly regarded to be co-extensive with Urdu ghazals and as Mir is a pre-eminent ghazal writer, he is naturally regarded to be the greatest of Urdu poets.¹ Ghalib and Nasikh and all subsequent writers of note have acknowledged his greatness and speak of him as a master of the art. Ghalib has gone to the extent of saying --

غالب اپنا تو یہ عقیدہ ہے بقول ناسخؔ آپؔ بہرہ ہے جو معتقد میر نہیں

Mir was a prolific writer. He lived to a ripe old age and his literary activities extended over a long period. His works are --

1. Six large Divans of Rakhta ghazals.
2. A Diwan in Persian.
3. Numerous Masnavis.
4. A pamphlet entitled Faiz-i-Mir.
5. A Taskirah entitled Nakat-us-Shaura.
6. His autobiography Zikr-e-Mir in Persian.

1. R.B. Saxena, A History of Urdu Literature, p. 76.

His Diwans of Urdu ghazals contain not only ghazals but rubais, ¹mukhammasat and other varieties of compositions.

Mir wrote a few ²qasidas which are not of very high order and suffer in comparison with those of his rival Sauda. Four of them are invocatory in character and only one is in praise of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula. This form of poetry did not attract him, flattery and minionism were not in his nature.

Some of his mukhammasat are invocatory; others are in the nature of 'complaint of time' (شیر آشوب), which may be regarded as satires on Shah Alam and his court. Next to his ghazals, rank his masnavis, which are numerous, consisting chiefly of satires, eulogies and love tales. The most important of them are -

1. Aigarnama also called Azhdarnama or The book of the Dragon; which, in R.B. Saxena's opinion, "is the ebullition of Mir's self conceit and contempt for contemporary urdu poets. In this masnavi he represents himself as a dragon devouring the smaller animals, such as scorpions, snakes etc., within his reach, to wit the poets whose works be held in such light esteem.

1. A poem of five lines stanzas, rhyming AAAAX.
2. A lengthy poem rhyming AA, BA, CA etc.; generally a panegyric ode.

2. Shola-i-Ishq or 'The Flame of Love'.
3. Josh-i-Ishq or 'The Ebbulition of Love.'
4. Darya-i-Ishq or 'The Ocean of Love.'
5. Aliza-i-Ishq or 'The Miracle of Love.'
6. Khuab-o-khaval or 'The Dream and Thought.'
7. Mamlat-i Ishq or 'The Transactions of Love.'
8. Masnavi Tambi-ul-Khaval which praises the art of poetry and its dignity.

Most of Mir's masnavis deal with love stories ending in tragedy. His own love story is a tragedy and the realistic love masnavi in Urdu always is.¹ A possible reason for the development of such a style is that the society in which they lived, love was a tragedy. In their days love and marriage were regarded as two quite separate things. Not only separate but also as mutually opposed. Marriage was something, which was decided by the parents of the bride and bridegroom. The boy and the girl did not see each other until they were already man and wife. The main danger to this ordered course of life was love, and society exerted every effort to forestall the danger or to deal with it

1. Ralph Russel and Khursheed-ul-Islam, Three Mughal Poets, p. 98.

drastically if it arose. Its main preventive measures were parda and early marriage. In this way society did what it could to prevent love. But it is most interesting to note that the lovers themselves believed that love was a force which threatened to destroy the foundations of society, and that society was obliged to defend itself against it, even if they themselves were to be the victims.

In his masnavi Sho'la-i Isha, Mir has portrayed a situation unusual in eighteenth - century life and literature alike, where the lovers are husband and wife. The main character was a Hindu named Parasram. He was a handsome looking boy, who was loved by many. He too reciprocated¹ But left him when he was married. His friend questioned him for the cause of indifference towards him. When the truth was revealed his friend tried to convince him that it was only woman's deceit and not true love, and if he did not believe him he should put his wife, to test.² Parasram agreed

1. Kullivat, pp. 890-899.

2. Parda system was prevalent in the 18th century and this masnavi of Mir brings out the inevitable consequence of the parda system, that was, homosexual love, and here Mir has portrayed it as one of the common manifestations of love.

to do so. He spread the false news that he was drowned. This test proved ruinous for him, for his wife could not bear the news and died. The news of her death drove Parasram mad.

Similarly other masnavi Darya-i Ishq (River of Love) also has the same theme, in which a handsome boy falls in love with a girl but the society prevents them from meeting. The boy is put to all sorts of tortures. The story again has a tragic end. Thus most of his masnavis tend to show that in the 18th century society there was a complete segregation of men and women.

Besides these works three masnavis, entitled Shikarnama, describe the hunting expeditions of Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah. This sport had become quite popular and served more as a means of recreation and past-time than a mere hobby. Though these expeditions were not uncommon during the Mughal period, but a comparison between the two

1. بہت ہم نے دیکھے وزیر و شہاں ؛ شکار ایسے دستور سے تھا کیاں

Kulliyat-i-Mir, edited by Dr. Masī-uz-zaman, Vol. II
P. 187.

shows that in the days of Akbar and Aurangzeb the hunting expeditions were not so frequent, probably because of the preoccupation of the emperors in the expansion and consolidation of the empire. Whereas, the nawab of Awadh, specially after the battle of Buxar (1764 A.D.), was freed from the burden of protecting the state as its defence became the responsibility of the Britishers.

Besides this there are many short masnavis on pets, such as cocks, cats, goats, dogs etc. These masnavis reflect the mental climate of the age. People led a life of luxury for they used their pets in different kinds of sports like cock-fighting, pigeon-fighting etc. The first meeting of Mir with Asaf-ud-daula was when he came to see¹ the cock-fighting.

There is a 'Saqi-Namah' (the book of the cup-bearer of wine) which has spring for its subject. This composition of Mir brings out his mystic character.

1. Zikr, p. 139.

پس از پنج چار روز اتفاقاً نواب علی بتقریب جنگانیدن خروس، تشریف
آوردند منته آن جا بودم۔

He has also written a few marisiyas but was not very successful in this field. His fame chiefly rests on his ghazals and masnavis.

The Diwan in Persian was compiled in one year as Mushaffi informs us, when he had temporarily stopped composing in urdu.¹

'Nikat-us-Shaura' is a Tazkirah written about the year 1165 A.H. (1752 A.D.).² It is one of the earliest memoirs of Urdu poets and is exceedingly interesting and useful. Unfortunately it is fragmentary in nature. It deals with the biographies of about a hundred and sixty Urdu poets.³ But at times Mir bitterly criticised some well known figures, like Hatim, who is condemned as illiterate. A careful study of Nikat-us-Shaura reveals Mir's nature in the boldest relief. Mir's assessments of men and situations goes a long way to illustrate his own likes and dislikes. Khwaja Ahmed Farooqi believes that the picture of Mir drawn from the study of

1. R.B. Saxena, A History of Urdu Literature, p. 75.

2. Reign of Ahmed Shah.

3. K.A. Farooqi, Mir Taqi Mir Hayat Aur Shairi, p. 526.

Nikat-us-Shaura is entirely different from the one drawn from other sources. Mir's poetry is characterized by a unique freshness of treatment and approach. In this work he has, however, stressed on certain other traits of character, and has tried to dig out these qualities in the nature of the other poets, which shows that he prefers these qualities on which he has emphasised more than the other qualities.¹ For instance, about Umeed he has said—

عزیز دل با خوش اعتلاط ہمیشہ خدایا و شگفتہ رو

Abour Mubrak he says --

طبع شوق داشت

For Khwaja Mir Dard --

2

خلیق متواضع آشنائے دوست

Mir's criticism bring out his poetic point of view. He did not want to restrict his poetry to a particular subject. His verses are simple, eloquent, poignant, changed with pathos and pain. They have the greatest appealing

1. K.A. Farooqi, Mir Taqi Mir Hayat aur Sha'iri, p. 526.

2. Ibid.

power and force, for instance -

تو ہے بچارہ کہ امیر ترا کیا مذکور
مل گئے خاک میں یاں صاحبِ افسر کتنے

These verses shows the social situation, rise and fall of families - destruction of old-well-established families

Faiz-i Mir is an important prose work of Mir. The only information available about this work of Mir is that he started writing it at Delhi, during the life time of Muhammad Hussain Kalim (a relative of Mir) and after the death of Mian Saeed Khan. But unfortunately the dates of their deaths are not known and it is difficult, therefore, to estimate when exactly Mir composed it.

In this pamphlet, Mir has written some anecdotes and named it after his son Faiz Ali. He writes -

دریں ایام فیض علی پس من ذوق خواندن ترسل پیدا کردہ بود
طکایات خمسہ متضمن فوائد بسیار را باندک فرصت نگاشتم
ومراعات اسم او نموده نام نسخہ "فیض میر" گزاشتم۔

1

1. K.A. Farooqi, Mir Taqi Mir Hayat aur Sha'iri, p. 517.

Mir's life was that of a person with frustration and bitterness. Though his poignant verses, he gives expression to the agony of his soul. His verses breathe the atmosphere of the age in which old and respectable families were being pulled down and a sense of uncertainty prevailed everywhere. The language, he adopted, according to R.B. Saxena, "suited his genius and temper."¹ His greatest quality is his fine artistic sensitivity. Quick to comprehend social and cultural situations, he could express them in extremely effective verses. His poetry thus mirrors the attitude of the age. Mir's claim to being a superb artist cannot be overlooked --

دل کو کر سنگ
یعنی یہ سنگ
اجڑے تھے گھر
عرصہ تھا تنگ

دلی میں بہت سخت کی اب گزراں
غیرت نہ رہی عاقبت کار نہ شاں
یاروں میں نہ تھا مروت جو کرے
تاجہ نظر صاف پڑے تھے میدان

Another characteristic of Mir's poetry is that he laments not for himself alone but for his community, for his countrymen. Poetry mirrors the attitudes and aspirations

1. R.B. Saxena, A History of Urdu Literature, p. 78.

of the people living in a particular age. Mir's poetry gives expression not only to his personal emotional experiences but to the prevailing conditions of society also. The political situation of the times is reflected in the vagaries of his fortune. For a genius, as Mir was, it was a torturous position. The rancour of his soul finds expression in his verses full of pathos and feeling. His poetic works give us insight into the spirit of the age, his autobiographies supplies interesting political details which help us to understand the man and the poet.

...

CHAPTER - II

ZIKR - I - MIR -- ITS' IMPORTANCE

The eighteenth century in India, can be called a century of paradox, for though it saw the disintegration of the political structure of the Mughal empire, the Mughal culture touched its apogee and continued to exercise deep influence on the social thought and behaviour of the people for a long time. There was an unprecedented expansion in art, literature, philosophy and science during this period. While political developments took their own course, the poets, scholars, and artists remained engaged, serene and undisturbed in extending the frontiers of knowledge, reflecting the aims and aspirations of common people and cherishing such ideals and values as were likely to trans-¹figure their life and being. Besides this, another gift of the eighteenth century was the historical literature that was produced during this period. Innumerable official and unofficial historical records, biographies, chronicles, taskirahs, etc. were written during this century. This literature, varied and interesting as it is, throws invaluable light on Indian culture and social life during the eighteenth century. In fact, there is hardly any period

1. Z.U. Malik, Reign of Muhammad Shah, p. 342.

in Indian history which was so prolific in the production of literature as this century. Though biographies and autobiographies had been compiled by eminent literary and political figures of medieval India, and rulers like Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Firoz Tughlaq, Babur and Jehangir left their autobiographical accounts, which are full of interesting details, it was during the eighteenth century that the art of writing biographies and taskirahs touched its highest water mark.

It is amazing that during this period of political decline literary activity became brisk and a number of distinguished poets and prose writers produced their works of great value. Mir, was one of the most outstanding poets of his age. His poetic compositions were always looked up as literary masterpieces on account of their artistic beauty and pathos. He had written an autobiographical account, Zikr-i Mir, which remained hidden from posterity for decades. It was in 1929 A.D. that Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu published this work, which had gone into oblivion.

(a) Historical Importance:

The Zikr-i Mir was received with approbation by the Urdu reading public, particularly those interested in the poetic contribution of Mir. Though it lacked in chronological

order, it was replete with incidents and events of historical significance covering a period of about forty years, from 1748 A.D. to 1788 A.D. Mir witnessed the reigns of six Mughal kings.¹ He has successfully recorded social and political conditions prevailing during their reigns. In his narration of events he combines poetic perception with a keen sense of political realities.

Though Zikr-i Mir attracted the attention of literary critics, soon after its publication, nobody thought of its value as a masterpiece of historical information. It was for the first time pointed out by Khwaja Ahmed Farooqi² that besides being an autobiographical account and a literary masterpiece, the book is full of historical events and he regrets that none of the historians have ever tried to utilize the historical informations given in this account of Mir. In this dissertation a humble attempt is made to assess the historical importance of Zikr-i Mir.

1. Muhammad Shah (1719-1748 A.D.)
 Ahmed Shah (1748-1754 A.D.)
 Alangir II (1754-1759 A.D.)
 Shahjahan II (1759 Nov. - 1760 Oct.)
 Shah Alam II (Dec. 1760 A.D. - July 1788 A.D.)
 Akbar II (1788 A.D.)

2. K.A. Farooqi: Mir Taqi Mir Hayat Aur Shairi, p. 535.

The main theme of the historians of the period under review was politics and subjects of secular character were given great importance. They believed that the developments of historical significance could be explained by highlighting the accomplishments of a chosen few.¹ For them, key to historical understanding lay in the rise and fall of individuals, who played prominent role in determining the course of political affairs. The king and the members of the governing class were the centre of all political activity. All others -- belonging to different strata of society were thrown into the background. Zikr-i-Mir fits into the same pattern but there is something in its presentation which singles it out from the rest of the historical records of the time. Probably it is Mir's impartial and unbiased assessment of men and movements. Though many a times he indulges in praise of his patrons, yet he does'nt overlook their short comings. He tries to be fair in the evaluation of their roles. He praises Raja Nagar Mal, with whom he stayed for twelve years, but when he betrayed the Mughal King and sided with the Marathas,

1. Z.U. Malik, Persian Historiography In India during the 18th Century vide Historians of Mughal India, Mohibbul Hasan, p. 145.

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Mir did not spare him for his treachery and left his employment.¹ No personal gain could blind him to moral and ethical values which he cherished and upheld.

Zikr-i Mir is full of such instances and it is this fair and impartial judgement of men and situations which makes the work exceptionally valuable as a source of contemporary history. Since the age was one of political decline and economic distress caused by the constant² invasions of Abdali and the factional feuds, there runs a thread of gloom through the entire contemporary historical writings. Zikr-i Mir follows the pattern of historical literature of the time in this respect but still, the gloomy picture of the times, instead of making the readers sorry for the events, arouses their feelings and makes ones' heart bleed at the tyranny of the invaders and sufferings of the people. For instance the description of the ransack of Delhi by Abdali's in 1751.—

1. Zikr, p. 121

2. Abdali invaded India seven times starting from 1748 AD to 1765 A.D.

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"A few moments of the night had passed when the Afghan plunderers began to sack and ravage the people and set the city on fire. It was a morning like that of a doomsday. Houses were burnt and razed to ground. The Ruhela and Afghan troops started plundering and killing the people. The gates were broke open and people were killed in cold blood. Most of them were burnt alive and others were beheaded. The whole city (world) was razed¹ to dust."

As the historians of the eighteenth century had their own individual and independent methods of collecting the data, their interpretations of facts considerably varied. The variation in assessment was also due to their different social and political background. In factional feuds among the courtiers most of them had aligned themselves with one or the other factions. This identification with interest of a group naturally affected their approach to the recording of events and explaining their impact on the course of history. This element of subjectivity deprived them of the faculty of

1. Zikr, p. 85.

critically evaluating the causes and consequences of events in their proper context. This partisan politics marred their perspective and closed the horizon of their ideas. As a result of which history was reduced to a mere collection of facts to be read like political pamphlets.¹ But Mir Taqi Mir is free from bias and prejudice, and his approach to the history of the period is objective if not critical. What he observed he recorded in plain and direct terms without resorting to rhetoric and embellishment. He has neither eulogised the personal merits and political policies and actions of his patrons, nor censured those of his opponents. He had the opportunity to watch closely the actions of different nobles both in the court and the camp, but, being a poet, he took no interest in their matters, and consequently has given no details regarding the complicated issues of power politics which they were playing. He has elaborated on the effects of large scale devastations that had disrupted the city life of Delhi, but disregarded to discuss the various causes which led to, or deals in which he himself was involved.

1. Z.U. Malik, Persian Historiography In India during Eighteenth Century vide Historians of Mughal India, Mohibbul Hasan, p. 149.

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Stern veracity is an important quality of any historical writings, including memoirs and diaries; and the historian is expected to lay before the readers an exact, clear and impartial state of facts. Judged by this standard, the memoirs of Mir Taqi Mir shine forth as a real projection of political and social milieu in which the author lived and experienced woes of misery and adversity resulting from the destruction of old order. Though short and succinct, the autobiography comprehends a variety of topics and spans over a long period of the eighteenth century history. Truthfulness and unambiguity characterize the narration of facts, while assessment of the role of actors in the fast changing situations was candid and judicious. In the absence of modern type of news agencies, historical and literary works in the period under review served as effective instruments to record and transmit daily occurrences and their lives and fortunes of people. Zikr-i Mir undoubtedly falls under this category. Like other contemporary works it also contains accounts of devastation and ruin that had continuously afflicted the inhabitants of Delhi, the worst sufferers being the aristocrats and rich persons. The whole contemporary literature is highly saturated in pathos and gloom which

arouses feelings of pity for those who suffered at hands of the invaders and plunderers. What has made the reading of the Taskirah more painful and dreary is the poignancy which the author adds to the tragedies by vividly describing his own personal failures and frustrations. While the social structure in which he moved was breaking down under a number of pressures, the personality of Mir rapidly became disorganised and imbalanced.

In times of crisis Mir failed to maintain serenity and balance of mind; more often than not he gave in to desperation. He has lamented on small setbacks and mis-happenings, which every mortal has to face and cope with, as a part of normal conditions of life. He has wailed on hopes wrecked and dreams shattered, but conveniently passed over periods of peace and happiness he enjoyed. Of good health, longevity of life, ample leisure, pleasant routine, freedom of thought and action, status of honours in the society, and aristocratic ways of life he has nothing or little to say.

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(b) Autobiographical Importance:

The use of the word 'autobiography' is very recent, the new Oxford Dictionary ascribes the earliest known use of this word to Carlyle who in 1809 wrote "What would we give for such an autobiography of Shakespeare." An autobiography has been defined as a self-revealing record that yields information regarding not only the frame-work, dynamics and functioning of the authors' mental life, but also the general condition of state and society. There is comprehensive autobiography, like H.G. Wells's, Experiments in Autobiography, which is large and voluminous, covering a wide spectrum of themes and extending over a large span of time. A topical autobiography is relatively small, selective, and condensed dealing with a single topic or episode of personal experience, but nevertheless generally presenting a clear and integrated picture of the contemporary scenes and situations.

Obviously, Zikr-i Mir belongs to the second form of autobiography; for it fundamentally deals with the topic of the destruction of the society in which the poet lived and underwent experiences of distress and disappointment.

For this reason his biographers feel constrained to call it a biography, because in their view its theme revolves more around the socio-political changes than the life of the writer. He devotes very little space to self-description, while political history of the period constitutes the main mass of the book. After briefly describing his early life under adverse circumstances and gradual emergence as a great poet, he concentrates on details of political history of forty years, 1748-1788, in which the¹ sun of the Mughal Empire finally set, never to rise again. This section of the book is exclusively concerned with the account of foreign invasions and their dreadful consequences, court intrigues, factional feuds among the nobles, the raids of the Marathas, plunder and devastation of Delhi, final extinction of the Mughal rule and the elite classes which had for long flourished under it, and the state of affairs in the kingdom of Awadh. It also contains descriptive sketches of nobles, and the authors' comments on their role and conduct in these political developments, though made incidentally and unwittingly.

1. Raml Russel, Khursheedul Islam, Three Mughal Poets, p. 237.

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Brief references pertaining to the poets' personal experiences are informative and supply key to the understanding of various phases of liquidation through which the Mughal ruling class was passing during this period. The approach to the recording of experiences and events is naturally subjective, but the facts brought together in the work are accurate and authentic, while the style of narration is absorbing and enlightening.

During this period of turmoil Mir found himself faced with the crisis of identity, and torment of his traditional socio-cultural mournings.

Mir had an overwhelming sense of self-respect and sensitive by nature. His poverty embittered him and his lofty nature disdained pity and help. This characteristic of Mir is very clearly reflected in Zikr-i Mir, though not even once did Mir put it in so many words. It is the artistic and articulate presentation of facts that brings out this quality of Mir. A complete study of the book tends to bring out complete life of Mir, which was one of long misery and poverty, while on the long other hand it gives a clear picture of socio-political structure of

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the period. Thus while Mir has laboriously tried to narrate the political events of the time, but has hardly been able to avoid making comments on the doings and conduct of the actors who were busy in playing selfish and reckless game of politics.

(c) Literary Importance:

As far as the style is concerned it is simple and elegant. And this is no surprise for readers for pathos always speaks in simple, subdued gentle and unadorned language. In Zikr-i Mir, Mir has mirrored his ideas so truthfully and with such wealth of detail that the picture presented in words stands as a real thing before the mind's eye. As for instance the reception of Governor General Warren Hastings at Lucknow.

The Prime-minister set out to receive the honor^uable governor, who was coming from Calcutta, on his invitation. The whole country was under his sway. The dust raised by

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1. Eg. The description of the welcome of Governor Warren Hastings at Lucknow. Zikr, p. 143.

Nawab Asaf-ud-daula's hobby of witnessing the cock-fighting and the hunting expeditions of the nawab. Ibid., pp. 139-140.

the army reached the sky. He made this journey to Allahabad and the chiefs of the district gathered to welcome him. The Nawab met the governor at a distance of one stage and brought him to Lucknow where in the palace the distinguished guest was to stay. At every stage the governor and his retinue were lavishly entertained and new tents were erected¹ for them.

Zikr-i Mir lacks the chronological order. But the difficulty of finding the dates is easily removed because in giving the details of most of the events, Mir has tried to correlate the event with some important or striking event, dates for which, can easily be found out in any contemporary record. For instance in order to write about the appointment of Safdarjang as wazir, instead of stating it straight away he relates it to the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah in² Deccan.

1. Zikr, p. 143.

2. Ibid., p. 169.

وقتیکہ نظام الملک آصفیہ در دکن فوت گشت
منصب وزارت بہ صفدر جنگ رسید۔

Mir has dealt in detail with the invasions of Abdali, giving a vivid and pathetic description of the myseries and sufferings which the public had to endure during these invasions. As far as the causes and consequences of these invasions are concerned a comparison to the contemporary records bears testimony to the fact that Mir has maintained strict veracity. Similar is the treatment given to other political events narrated in Zikr-i-Mir.

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1. Murder of Nawab Bahadur, IIIrd Battle of Panipat.
Zikr, p. 93.

CHAPTER - III

MIR'S ACCOUNT OF POLITICAL EVENTS

Zikr-i-Mir or the autobiography of Mir Taqi Mir is a diary of political events, covering a period of nearly half a century, 1739-1788, during which six Mughal kings¹ reigned and in the end the vast empire shrank to some districts of the subah of Delhi. But the account of events presented in the diary is devoid of any perspective of the past or the future. The sequence of events as set in the work has no background to make the picture of the political scene clear, nor is the account enlivened with the poetic vision of a bright future. His view of history is pessimistic for ~~he~~ he sees no hope of freedom from a cruel and corroding present with which he is exclusively concerned.

For the purpose of critically analysing the data contained in the autobiography of Mir, an attempt has been made in this chapter to arrange the information in a chronological order, compare and co-relate it with that provided by other important contemporary sources. New and

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- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. 1 - Muhammad Shah | 28 Sept. 1719 - 15 April 1748 |
| 2 - Ahmed Shah | 1748 - 1754 |
| 3 - Alamgir II | 1754 - 1759 |
| 4 - Shahajahan II | 1759 - 10 Oct. 1760 |
| 5 - Shah Alam II | 1760 - 31 July 1806 |
| 6 - Akbar II | |

interesting facts discovered from these sources have been added and controversial issues have been thoroughly researched and carefully reasoned.

The first political event recorded by Mir is the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739. He has neither discussed the circumstances that caused this tragedy, nor its general repercussions on the country. He has mentioned it mainly because it resulted in the death of his patron, Samsam-ud-¹daula, who had provided him^{with} subsistence allowance. The consequences of the invasion were disastrous for him and also to the city of Delhi.

The second political event which he describes in detail is the murder of Amir Khan.² The date of this event

1. Infra, p.209-210; Shahnawaz Khan, Ma'athir-ul-Umara (tr.) Vol. III, p. 880, Tarikh-i-Muhammadi, p. 106.

2. Mir adds a few words about Amir Khan, that he was an outstanding noble during the reign of Muhammad Shah and was a Subedar of Allahabad. He was a poet and his nom-de-plume was 'Anjam'. Zikr, p. 73. Harcharandas, Chahar Gulzar-e Shujae (Rotograph) f.no. 100.

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has not been given. Amir Khan, a great patron of art and letters, had also helped the poet in his adversity.

The next political event recorded by Mir, is the death of Muhammad Shah and the accession of Ahmed Shah.² He writes that on the receipt of the news at Sirhind, Safdarjang lost no time in proclaiming the Prince as the new Emperor and he presented him with a royal umbrella.³ The new Emperor entered the city of Delhi with great pomp

1. Sir J.N. Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 39 has given reasons for the murder of Amir Khan (25 Dec. 1746 A.D.). In his opinion Amir Khan had turned arrogant. He had begun to press his advice and demands upon the Emperor and to treat the other fellow nobles with contempt. This aggravated the other nobles. Thus an aggrieved servant of Amir Khan stabbed him to death. Sivar-ul-Mutakkherin, Vol. III, pp. 857-8. Chahar Gulzar-i-Shuja'i (Rotograph), f. 100.
2. Emperor Muhammad Shah whose illness had taken a serious turn after the departure of his son against the Abdali invader died in Moti Mahal (Pearl Palace) of the Delhi Fort at about two during the night of 25 April 1748. Sivar-ul-Mutakkherin, Vol. III, p. 864. Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shah, p. 111. Cf. Elliot and Dowson, The History of India as told by Its Own Historians, Vol. VIII.
3. The prince desired to postpone his enthronement till he had reached Delhi. But Safdarjang wisely insisted on an immediate proclamation of his accession and not allowing a moments interregnum which was likely to be fraught with dangers. Anonymous, Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi (Rotograph) p. 12a.

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and show. At the durbar held on this occasion Ahmad
Shah conferred the title of Nawab Bahadur' on Javed Khan,²
who held the post of assistant controller of harem and
manager of the Begams estate, during the reign of Muhammad
Shah. Now all power passed into his hands. This elevation
of a eunuch provoked criticism of the nobles, especially
Safdarjang, the wazir, and they began to intrigue for his
fall. Even Mir has expressed his surprise at the rise of
this petty and unknown courtier, to this high position.

Mir Taqi Mir has given a list of the Mughal
mansabdars who had led their contingents to fight Ahmad
Shah Durrani in 1748 at Sirhind. These were Qamaruddin
Khan, the wazir, Safdarjang, Mir Atash and Ishwari Singh-³
Rajah of Jaipur, besides Prince Ahmad, the heir-apparant,
who held the supreme command. Before the commencement of the

1. Zikr, p. 68.

On 11 May 1748, the new Emperor entered the city
mounted on a huge elephant in a grand procession and
on 9 May 1748, he paid his first royal visit to the Jama'
Masjid where he heard the khutba (prayer for sovereign)
recited in his name. Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi (Rotograph)
p. 136. Siyar-ul-Mutakkhherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 865.

2. For Javed Khan's life, Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi (Rotograph)
14b-16b, 20b 85a; Siyar-ul-Mutakkhherin (Persian),
Vol. III, pp. 872-892. Infra, p. 205

3. Zikr, p. 68. Khazina-i-Amira, pp. 97-98.

battle between the Afghan and the Mughal armies at Sirhind, Qamaruddin Khan died of a cannon shot, and the whole brunt of commanding and supervising the campaign fell on his son Moin-ul-Mulk. Mir was present in the battle-field, living in the camp of Riyat Khan¹, a relation of the wazir and mansabdar of 6000/6000. Though an eye-witness of the bloody scene, the author refrains² from giving it's details.

Anand Ram Mukhlis, who was also present in the battle field presents a different story regarding the death of Qamaruddin Khan. He says that earlier two spies had come near the tent of the wazir, in a bid to survey and measure the distance between the two camps. They had pretended to be deserters, declaring that large number of their comrades in-arms were ready to follow their example if tempting offer was made to them. Thus deluding the Mughal guards, the spies managed to return and report to their

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1. He was the uterine brother of Muhammad Amin Khan. He had accompanied Asaf Jah from Malwa to Deccan and rendered valuable services in the battle against Saiyyad Alam Ali Khan there. His rank was raised to 5000/5000 and he was granted the title of 'Zahir-ud-daula.' Ma'asir-ul Umara, Vol. II, pp. 608-609.
 2. Zikr, p. 68, for details of the battle see Khazana-i-Amirah, p. 97. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 864; Shahnawaz Khan, Ma'athir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 489

gunners the exact position of the wazir's tent. This information enabled the artillery-men to throw the canon, which tearing the tent fell on the wazir and mortally wounded him.¹

Ghulam Ali, author of Imad-us-Saadat says that Mahdi Quli Beg, commander of artillery of the Afghan army, had visited the wazir with a pretext to negotiate peace but in doing so he measured the distance between the wazir's tent and the position of his artillery by counting his steps.² Thus these facts contained in other contemporary sources tend to suggest that the cannon shot was not fired randomly but with precision and accuracy based on the information supplied by the Afghan agents. But Mir is silent on this important issue.

Mir has described the battle between Bakht Singh and Abhai Singh, sons of Rajah Ajit Singh, in detail, simply because his patron Riyat Khan fought in it on the side of ^{the} former.³ Mir was also present in the camp of

1. Taskirah, pp. 274-276.

2. Imad-us-Saadat, p. 38.

3. Supra, p. 8.19, Infra, p. 229

Rajah Bakht Singh. He writes that Raja Abhaiy singh could not resist the onslaughts of the enemy owing to the cowardice of his soldiers who deserted him in the thick of fighting. He appealed to Malhar Rao Holkar to come to his aid but the Maratha general brought about reconciliation between the two combatants. At this time, however, a serious misunderstanding developed between Riyat Khan and Bakht Singh, and though Mir tried to remove it by pacifying the Rajah, his efforts bore no fruits. The Rajah paid the salary of his soldiers and allowed him to go back to Delhi.

The author has also dealt with, though rather briefly, the struggle between Safdarjang, the Wazir and Ahmad Khan, the son of Muhammad Khan Bangash, the chief of Farrukhabad. After the death of Qaim Khan in the battle

1. Zikr, p. 71; Infra, p. 212-13. For details see Shahnawaz Khan, Ma'athir-ul-Umara (tr.) H. Beveridge Vol. II, pp. 160-163; Irwine W., 'The Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad', Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal (1878) XLVIII, pp. 268-367.

2. Safdarjang nurtured an ancestral rivalry against the Bangash Nawab and the Rohillas and was waiting for an opportunity to put an end to his rivals. This opportunity came to him in 1749, when he persuaded the emperor to appoint Qaim Khan to the government of Rohilkhand and call upon him to recover it from Sadullah Khan, son of Ali Muhammad Rohilla. Qaim Khan fell into the trap and marched upon the Rohillas. The battle began on 22 November 1749 in which Qaim Khan was killed. (Contd. on next page)

with Sa'adullah Khan, son of Ali Muhammad Khan,¹ the Rohilla chief of Aonla, Safdarjang worked to take possession of the entire wealth of the deceased. For the success of the selfish aim, he revived the obsolete Mughal practice² of escheating the property of a dead noble. However the task was not so easy as he had thought, for Ahmad Khan, the younger brother of Qaim Khan, stood up to face him and defeat his nefarious designs. He brought under his banner the shattered columns of the Afghans and having defeated³ his deputy, secured the possessions of his father and

(Contd. from previous page

Ma'athir-ul-Umara (tr.) Vol. II, pp. 163, Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 874. Irwine W., 'The Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad', J.A.S.B. (1878-79) XLVIII, pp. 371-383, Syed Altaf Ali Barelvi, Hayat-i-Hafiz Rahmat Khan, pp. 45-47.

1. For an account of Ali Muhammad Rohilla see Shahnawaz Khan, Ma'athir-ul-Umara (tr.), Vol. I, pp. 194-195.
2. Zikr, R 71; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 382.
3. Mir has not mentioned the name of the deputy Nawal Rai. He has also omitted the name of the battle. It was^{the} battle of Khudaganj, 13 August 1750 in which Nawal Rai was killed by Pathans. For details of the battle see Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 876, Imad-us-Sa'adat, p. 47, A.L. Srivastava, First Two Nawabs of Awadh, pp. 145-47. Also see, An Illustrated Historical Album of the Rajas and Taluqdars of Awadh, compiled and illustrated by Haji Abbas Ali, p. 6.

Established his own authority over the whole region.

Safdarjang retaliated by launching a massive campaign against Ahmad Khan, but he suffered a severe set-back in the battle of Ram Chatauni, 23 September 1750. In this fighting Ishaq Khan, the Imperial diwan and intimate friend of the wazir was killed, his army was routed and his equipage looted. It was a humiliation of the worst kind which the grand wazir of the empire

1. The description of the battle given by Mir corresponds with the description of the battle of Ram Chatauni, found in other sources, thus it can be safely concluded that the battle described by Mir between the wazir and the Bangash nawabs is of Ram Chatauni. He has not mentioned the name specifically. For details of the battle see Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian) Vol. III, pp. 878-879; A.L. Srivastava, First Two Nawabs of Awadh pp. 151-156; J.N. Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, pp. 246-252; Imad-us-Saadat, p. 49.
2. Zikr, p. 71; Infra, p. 201
Ishaq Khan lost his life in an attempt to save his friend Safdarjang, for while the victorious Bangashes were actively searching for the wazir, Ishaq Khan, pretended to be the wazir, the Bangashes fell on him, chopped off his head and carried it away to Ahmad Khan Bangash. It was there ^{that it was} recognised to be the head of Ishaq Khan.
Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 878; Imad-us Saadat, p. 49.
3. Much of his treasure and baggage was plundered by his own ungrateful Mughal troops and what was left fell a prey to the victorious Pathans. Ibid.

could not bear without redeeming his honour and re-burnishing his image. He formed an alliance with the Marathas and Jats, holding out to them great prospects of power and plunder, and with their armed assistance succeeded in crushing the power of the Afghans. But the victory gained at a high cost, in men and money, failed to stabilise his position at the court where there was a section of nobles, who disapproved his policy of liquidating the Afghans of the Upper Doab. Javed Khan, the all powerful eunuch, represented this section and he created new hurdles for the wazir in the realisation of his ambition. Hard pressed and disgusted by his mechanisations, Safdarjang found solution of extricating himself from the difficult situation in the assassination of Javed Khan.¹ Nevertheless, the cold-blooded murder of a favourite, infuriated the Emperor and his mother, who now resolved to oust the Wazir from court by any means. The death of Javed Khan was a personal loss to Mir, because he became jobless soon after the event.

1. Zikr, p. 72. Murdered on 27 August 1752. Siyar-ul-Mutakhherin (Persian), Vol. III, pp. 872-892. Ma'athir ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 367. Harcharandas, Chahar Gulzar-i Shu'ial (Rotograph) pp. 117-118, Imad-us-Saadat, p. 60; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, pp. 233-234.

death of Amir-ul-Umara Ghaziuddin Khan Feroze Jang occurred. He writes, "when Zulfiqar Jang Mir bakshi was dismissed from his post because of his rivalry with Javed Khan, the title of Amir-ul-Umara was conferred on Ghazi-ud-din Khan Feroze Jang. While he was on his way to set the administration of Deccan right, he died of cholera.¹ (Oct. 1752). The khilat of bakshigari was given to Imad-ul-Mulk,² son of Amir-ul-Umara Ghazi-ud-din Khan Feroz Jang, at the recommendation of Safdarjang.

1. Zikr, pp. 71-72; Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 890. According to Grant Duff he was poisoned by his step mother, the mother of NizamAli, Ma'athir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 593.
2. Ibid. Imad-ul-Mulk's original name was Shihabuddin, while departing for Deccan Feroz Jang had left him to the care of wazir Safdarjang. The wazir got him appointed Naib Mir Bakshi. After Feroze Jang's death, he made Imad-ul-Mulk exchange his turban with Shuja-ud-daula, a ceremony to show that they were friends. Even wazir's wife remained unveiled before him as a mother before a son. Safdarjang prevented his property from being confiscated by the Emperor and got him appointed Mir Bakshi with the title of Imad-ul-Mulk Amir-ul-Umara. But Imad-ul-Mulk proved ungrateful to the Wazir for he joined Itisam-ud-daula to encompass his benefactor's ruin. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 890, Imad-us-Sadat, pp. 62, 63. Ma'athir-ul-Umara (tr.) Vol. I, p. 674

Mir, at this juncture took to hermitage and busied himself in the study of literature. (Matul)

Rebellion of Safdarjang 1753:

After the ghastly murder of Javed Khan, the Emperor arranged a strong opposition against the vazir by winning over the Turani nobles, like Imad-ul-Mulk and Intizam-ud-daula, to his cause. The aim of this combination was the removal of Safdarjang from the court. Safdarjang calling to his aid, the Jats and Marathas, strove to protect his position and defeat the schemes of his enemies. A civil war ensued in the capital, which ruined all the chances for the stability and strength of the Mughal government.

Imad-ul-Mulk and Intizam-ud-daula defended the city by fighting the forces which Safdarjang had brought from different quarters. In Mir's view there were very dim chances of the success of the royalists but the imperial troops fought with such zeal and vigour, that Safdarjang had to give in and he ultimately sued for peace. Safdarjang's submission satisfied the Emperor and he instead of punishing the rebel further allowed him to retire to his subah of Awadh and the office of Wazir

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was given to Intizam-ud-daula.

Though Safdarjang was defeated, the Emperor was not victorious. The treasury was exhausted. The Marathas had occupied large and fertile lands in the subah of Delhi and constituted an important element in the imperial politics. They were wooed by the opposing factions and even the emperor needed this help against the recalcitrant nobles. Later confusion reigned in the administration and an atmosphere of gloom and despondency prevailed in the corridors of power in Delhi.

2

Imad-ul-Mulk after assuming the charge of Vizarat planned to attack the stronghold of the Jat Rajah, Suraj Mal, who had sided with Safdarjang and he persuaded the emperor to lead the campaign in person. The Emperor did not approve of the plan and preferred to stay in palace.

3

Mir has briefly recounted the events relating to the tragedy that befell on Ahmad Shah and his family at

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1. Zikr, p. 69, Intizam-ud-daula was appointed Wazir in Safdarjang's place on 13 May, 1752, with the title of Qamar-ud-din Khan Bahadur and Imad-ud-daula, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 483. Anonymous, Tarikh-i Ahmad Shahi (Rotograph) History Seminar, AMU, pp. 51a-53a. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 892.
 2. Zikr, p. 72.
 3. Ibid.

Sikandra. The growing power of Imad- excited the envy and jealousy of Intizam-ud-Daulah, the yazir and the two rivals waited for an opportunity to beat each other down. When Imad sent repeated appeals to the court for big guns to storm Kumbher, the Jat fort, which he was besieging, Intizam persuaded the Emperor not to concede to his requests. He wanted to save the Jat raja from the destruction and use his strength and influence against Imad, who now resolved to take revenge on the Emperor and his yazir. What added fuel to fire was the scheme which Intizam had prepared to get rid off Imad. It was planned that Suraj Mal and Safdarjang should be won over and their help sought to counteract the challenge of the Marathas, ^{who were} _{how} in close and staunch alliance with the Marathas. Accordingly secret letters were written to the ^{re} _{ers} ^{whole} rebels, and an interview of the two with the Emperor was proposed to be held at Sikandra. Under the influence of Intizam, the Emperor agreed to go to the place to discuss a concerted action with the two chiefs. But Imad and his allies received information of the plot against them, and they immediately organised a counter-offensive to overwhelm and intimidate the Emperor before it was put into operation. No sooner had the Emperor encamped at Sikandra-bad than the Maratha leader, Malhar Rao Holkar, made a surprise attack on the night of 26 May 1754, and completely routed the royal force. Ahmad Shah found safety in flight

to Delhi, but in doing so he did not care to take along with him all the members of the harem, who were left at the mercy of the invaders. Malika-i Zamani and other ladies were captured, their jewellery looted, and they were exposed to public gaze and put to hardship. "Such a calamity, writes Sarkar, had never before fallen on the house of Timur and it lowered the head of everyone¹ in Delhi."

Mir attributes this tragedy to the cowardice of the Emperor, who instead of facing the attack boldly only² thought of his own safety. It was a severe blow to the authority and prestige of the Mughal monarchy from which it could never recover itself.

Raja Nagar Mal is appointed Wazir :

In 1754 Ahmad Shah appointed Raja Nagar Mal to the post of Wizarat, and conferred on him the titles of³ 'Maharaja' and 'Umdat-ul-Mulk'. The Rajah had served the

1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 336.

2. Zikr, p.73-74.

3. Ghulam Ali Azad, Imad-us Saadat, p. 54; Zikr, p. 75.

imperial government as diwan of khalisa and tan, during the reign of Muhammad Shah. He was one of the most competent and trusted officer in the court. His generosity and kindness to the general public contributed to his popularity in Delhi. But these noble qualities became the cause of opposition by other amirs and officers who set out to work for his total ruin. To safeguard himself the new vazir moved under guard.

He was a great patron of poets and men of letter, and financially supported Mir in recognition of his literary merits. Mir has praised him for his patronage and polished manners.¹

Dethronement of Ahmad Shah :

It appears that Imad-ul Mulk in league with Malhar Rao Holkar had formed strategy to dethrone Ahmad Shah and set up a new puppet king on the throne. In pursuance of this scheme they first terrorised the Emperor and his family at Sikandra and after their escape under humiliating circumstances they attacked Delhi and besieged the fort.² The Emperor was terrified and utterly helpless.

1. Zikr, p. 75.

2. Ibid.; Sivār-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 893.

He had no army to drive out the invaders, nor had he the support of any strong group of nobles who could come forward to save his position, in this hour of distress. He had no alternative but to yield to the demands of the conspirators. It was settled that Imad-ul-Mulk will take over charge of Wizarat after the dismissal of Intizam-ud-daulah. On 2 June 1754 Imad visited the court, and having taken the strongest oath on Holy Quran to preserve the authority and honour of the Emperor, he wore the khilat of Wizarat, and took his seat in the office. All the officers loyal to king and the former wazir were turned out and the palace was occupied by his own men. Shortly after these changes, Imad sent Aqibat Mahmud to bring out Prince Aziz-ud-din, son of Muiz-ud-din Jahandar Shah, grandson of Aurangzeb out of the princes quarters in the palace. When the Prince came Imad immediately moved up and paid homage to him as the new Emperor of the Mughal Empire. Prince Aziz-ud-din was seated on the throne, the royal umbrella held over his head and he was proclaimed Padishah Alamgir II. The new Emperor ordered the arrest and blinding of his predecessor. It was accordingly done.¹

1. Zikr, p. 75.
Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 894.
Shah Alam Nama, p. 21.

From the account of Mir, one comes to the conclusion that during those days emperor was at the mercy of powerful nobles and was a mere puppet in their hands. The nobility had become more powerful than the actual heads i.e. Mughal Emperors. The consequences of such a development were grave — The kings were dethroned one after the other and many incompetent characters came to hold the offices of responsibility. Samsam-ud-daula, who in Mir's opinion lacked the wisdom for such an office, was given the post of Amir-ul-Umara.¹ But all these incidents were unwarranted for. Mir was with Emperor Ahmad Shah in this trip.²

Death of Wazir Safdarjang (October 1754):

Regarding the death of Safdarjang, Mir has simply stated that the Wazir was succeeded by his son (1167 A.H./ 1754 A.D.) without going into the details or giving any

1. صمصام الدوله كه از عقل بهره نداشت اميرالامرا شد -

Zikr, p. 74.

2. مرچيه شد بيجا شد... من درين سفر دشت اثر با احمد شاه بودم
آمده عزلت اختيار نمودم -

~~Op. cit.~~ Ibid.

1

dates for the event.

Abdali's Invasion of Delhi And Agra 1757 :

According to Mir, Abdali after being defeated at Sirhind (1748), returned to Kabul but he never gave up the idea of conquering Hindustan. Consequently, he marched to Lahore with a huge army (in 1757). During the course of this invasion the Afghans inflicted great atrocities on the citizens of Lahore, Mir says, 'There was hardly any hardship which the people of Lahore did

1. Zikr, p. 74.

Back from Mahdi Ghat, Safdarjang threw himself into the task of strengthening his army and re-organising his resources so as to oppose successfully the ungrateful Imad-ul-Mulk, and the Marathas who were casting longing eyes upon Awadh and Allahabad. At this time a boil appeared on one of his legs and soon degenerated into a cancer. Experienced and skilled physicians were baffled in their efforts to cure him, and he died at Paparghat on the Gomti, on 17th Zil Hijjah 1167 H. (according to European calculation 5th October 1754 A.D.). Sivār-ul Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, pp. 894-95, Imad-us-Saadat, p. 65 gives the date 1166 H. First Two Nawabs of Awadh, p. 238. His remains were sent to Delhi and interred near the shrine of Shah-i-Mardan. His son Shuja-ud-daula who succeeded him in the governing of his subas, built a magnificent Mausoleum over his grave
Khazan-i Amrah, p. 86, Muhammad Ali Khan Bin Hidayat ullah, Tarikh-i Muzaffari (MS), Vol. II, pp. 27b-28a. Abdus Salam collection, A.M.U., Aligarh.

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not undergo and since India was without a defender, Abdali advanced towards Delhi. Mir has omitted the details of this invasion but is more informative about the panic and flight of the citizens of Delhi at the coming of the Afghan invaders.

1. The invasion of Delhi took place in January 1757, the state of affairs in the imperial capital were in such a miserable condition that the occupation of Delhi was effected by the Abdali on 19th January 1757 without much, rather any, difficulty.

Imad, the imperial wazir, who at the news of Abdali's advancement towards Delhi tried to face the challenge by forming a united front of all the native powers, failed in his attempt. Najib Khan, the Rohilla, joined the invader, Raja Suraj Mal could not come to terms. Thus, Imad was left alone to deal with the Abdalis. He was helpless, so, on 20th January 1757, he went to meet Abdali Shah to settle the matter but unfortunately the two could not come to terms. Abdali demanded two crores of rupees for him in return for his wazirship, which the wazir declined to pay as it was impossible, for him even to collect a crore of broken pebble stones in Delhi." The wazir submitted to him and was made a captive. Thus in this invasion of Abdali no serious engagement took place because the capital was left without a defender and so on 21 January 1757, five of Abdali's nasagchi (military policemen) entered the city, caused the khutba to be read in his name. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, pp. 62-67. Khazana-i-Amirah, pp. 99-100.

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According to Mir, Moin-ul-Mulk had already become weak and he died after a fall from horseback. The emperor and the wazir were unable to hold against the Abdali. So they went to Abdali and were imprisoned. (Raja Nagar Mal (the imperial diwan) along with a few remaining great men like, Saad-uddin Khansama, fled and took refuge in Suraj Mal's fort. Mir has estimated that for about a month the people of Delhi were under an agony of Afghan terror. Mir has given a heart-rendering account of the sufferings of the people of Delhi. It runs thus --

Raja Nagarmal reached safely to Suraj Mal's fort in the evening. Mir stayed back in the city i.e. Delhi. He informs us that in the evening it was announced that Shah Abdali had ordered for peace and so there was no need for the citizens to be panicky. But the heartless Afghans did not comply with the orders of their master. As soon as the darkness set in, the Afghans took to

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1. Zikr, p. 76. According to Sarkar, Imad went on 19th January 1757 followed by only four attendants, was made a captive after he resigned from Chancellorship of the state. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 65. There is no mention of the Emperor accompanying the Wazir. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 898; Khazana-i Amirah, pp. 99-100.

Abdali went to meet Alamgir at Shahjahanabad and Alamgir was not made a captive as recorded by Mir. Tarikh-i Muzaffari (Ms) Vol. II, p. 41a.

plunder. The city was set ablaze. The houses were broken and burnt. The devastation of the city continued unabated for the next day. The doors of the houses were broken open, people were massacred, many a times beheaded and sometimes burnt alive. Such oppression, according to Mir, showed as if this creation would come to an end. This cruel state of affairs lasted for about three days. Hardly anything was left for the people to eat or to wear. Men who had once enjoyed all the luxuries of life, were now reduced to such straits, that they longed for a drop of water. The mystics were rendered homeless, the nawabs became paupers.¹ As far as the vision could trust^{vel} nothing, but heaps of corpses could be seen. The streets were overflowing with the mourners.² The sight was unbearable.

1. The immense booty which the Afghan king collected from the rich zamindars and nobles can be estimated from the fact that the soldiers of his troops while returning home were on foot while their horses were loaded with the booty. From wherever he passed not even a mule was left. Khazana-i-Amirah, pp. 99-100. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 93. Ganda Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani, pp. 165-67.

2. Zikr, p. 76.

Describing the scene a contemporary of Mir has said -

مردوں کے ہر طرف میں پرے سکڑیں اٹم سکتے ہے کوئی راہ میں نکلے ہے کسی کا دم
ایک ہاتھ سرے نیچے رکھے ایک سر شلم مانتہ چوب پانوں میں خشکی سے پیچ دضم
چہر کا دُور فاقے کے اوپر گدہ ہے

Mir was so tremendously shocked and moved by the sufferings of the Delhi people that he has written many couplets to depict the ghastly scene of destruction and desolation. The massacre continued for about a week. Mir says, thus a civilization was put to an end, but there was none to oppose the cruel Afghans. The city of Delhi which according to Mir was known as 'city of grandeur' (Shahr-e-Ta'aza) for it's beauty and grandeur was now reduced to dust. The burning houses looked like a huge fireplace. In this ransack Mir's own house was also razed to the ground for which calamity, Mir says he would never forget the Afghan invaders.

From Delhi Abdali proceeded to Akbarabad in February 1757 leaving Alamgir II incharge of the affairs at Delhi. His troops carried on plunder all along their route. Mathura, a town 18 kos from Agra, and a place of pilgrimage for Hindus, was totally ruined by the

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1. اب فراہ ہوا جہاں آباد در نہ ہر ایک قدم پر گھر تھا
Kullivat-i Mir (Naval Kishore), p. 61.
 2. Zikr, p. 88. In one of his couplets Mir has said -
شہر میں گھر فراہ ہے اپنا آتے ہیں اب اس نشان سے لوگ
Kullivat-i Mir, p. 348.

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¹
invaders. Nature took it's revenge, a choleric ^{epidemic} broke
out in Abdali's and he was forced to retreat. Abdali
²
left Suraj Mal and returned home. On his way back he
³
married Muhammad Shah's daughter (5th April 1757) at

1. The week from 28th February to 6 March was the period of spring carnival (Holi) when in every Hindu house there was rejoicing. Holi was no doubt played in Mathura but there the dye so profusely poured was the life-blood of Hindus. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 73. Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (MS) Vol. II, pp. 41a-42b.

2. Zikr, p. 76.

After the plunder and extortion from Delhi Ahmad Shah turned towards Jat Raja Suraj Mal and reached Mathura, but he was not able to subdue the Jats this time. A cholera epidemic broke out in his army which forced him to retreat without fulfilling his mission. Thus leaving the affairs to be persued by Jahan Khan, Abdali retreated in April 1757. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, (Persian), Vol. III, p. 898.

3. The plunder that Ahmad Shah Abdali carried away from India was valued by contemporary reporters differently at three, four, nine and even twelve crores of rupees. The human booty of war included Hazrat Begum (the maiden daughter of Muhammad Shah). On 5th April she was taken decked up as a bride to Ahmad Shah. Delhi Chronicles (Ms). Indian Historical Records Commission (1921), p. 218. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 899.
Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (MS) Vol. II, pp. 42b-43a.

Delhi and left Imad-ul-Mulk to look after the affairs at Agra. Najib-ud-daula, the Rohilla chief, who had been an employee of Safdarjang, at the time of his rebellion now became ¹mir-bakshi.

Plan For Outsting Najib Khan From Delhi 1757:

Najib had been the right hand man of Abdali in this invasion of Delhi and he had been left by the Abdali as his supreme agent in Delhi. The people of Delhi were ultimately fed up by his high-handedness. Mir has described the events of those days as follows —

Raja Nagar Mal aligned himself with the Deccani sardars, Imad-ul-Mulk and Ahmad Khan and attacked Najib Khan. In Mir's view each of the allies had joined in for his own benefit which is obvious from their behaviour. When Najib-ud-daula shut himself up, the allies taking advantage of the situation started plundering the city. Raja Nagar Mal, who was a faithful and competent officer

1. Tarikh-i Muzaffari (MS), Vol. II, p. 43a.

2. Zikr, p. 77.
Abdul Ghulam Khan, Sarguzasht Nawab Najib-ud-daula, pp. 6-8.

tried to defend the city from the attacks of Marathas. He told his supporters that the Marathas were reckless and greedy and once they started plundering the citizens it would be very difficult to hold them down. Najib Khan made peace (3rd September 1757) and retired to Saharanpur, his estate. The wazir and his allies entered the city, Marathas went back and the Raja's son was appointed the Darogah-e-Tonkhana (Superintendent of Artillery).

Further Movements of Marathas in the North, September 1757:

Having placed the city of Delhi in the friendly hands of Imad-ul-Mulk (in 1757), the Maratha set out with confidence to conquer new places in the north. Mir says that Marathas had always considered themselves the rightful rulers of the country and therefore, could not bear the interference in their work by Abdalis.

As soon as the Marathas heard that Timur Shah, son of Ahmad Shah Abdali and Jahan Khan, his deputy in Lahore were beset with troubles and their grip over the province had loosened, they attacked Lahore. The Afghan army being inferior in number as well as strength, was unable to stand the Maratha invasion, consequently gave in. So the Marathas established their sway upto the river Attock. Leaving Sabaji

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a Maratha sardar to look after the affairs, the Marathas¹
left for Deccan.

The events relating to the invasion of 1759 fill a large part of the work. But the account of these events is preceded by a brief reference to some very important changes in the imperial politics. For mentioning these facts briefly, Mir has put forward two arguments. In the first place the events are so terribly shocking and nerve-racking that he feels himself unable to describe them. Secondly, recording the details of the events will² inevitably increase the volume of his autobiography.

A Brief Survey of the Events:

1. Misunderstanding between Imad-ul-Mulk and Shuja-ud-daula.³
2. Rebellion of Badakshi Sepoys.

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1. Zikr, pp. 79-80, Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (MS), Vol. II, p. 70b.
 2. Zikr, p. 80.

3. Ibid. Immediately after Emperor Alamgir's accession to the throne he was confronted with the financial difficulties. The salaries of his artillery guards had fallen into arrears for three years. But the imperial treasury was empty. ^{only} three weeks after the emperor's accession, the wazir Imad-ul-Mulk's artillerymen made a row for their pay in his mansion. There were scenes of rowdiness by the starving soldiery throughout 1754.
(Continued on next page



3. Imad-ul-Mulk's march from Lahore to confiscate the¹
estates of his father-in-law Moin-ul Mulk.
4. The fleeing of Mughlani Begum.²
5. Murder of Aqibat Mahmud Kashmiri, and Sattar Quli Khan
'Kashmiri'.

Continued from next page.....

Their crowning act of outrage was mobbing the wazir and dragging him on foot through Panipat city on 3 May 1755.

Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin (Persian), Vol. III, pp. 896-97;
Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai,² p. 437

1. After the death of Moin-ul-Mulk, the last imperial governor of Punjab in 1753, a dissolution set in, in the orderly administration of the Province. Though his infant son Muhammad Amin Khan was the viceroy of the province for four months but the real power lay in the hands of Mughalani Begum, his mother. But there were a number of rebellions against her authority, by her Turkish captains. Mughalani Begam, finding herself a captive in the hands of her Turkish captains appealed to Imad-ul-Mulk to rescue her and to marry her daughter Umda Begam, who had been betrothed to him. The wazir coveted the rich province. So in 1755 he sent his forces, but in the meantime Mughlani Begam had re-established her hold over the province. Imad resented her growing power. So he sent Saiyyad Jamil-uddin Khan, to kidnap her. She was made a captive and sent to wazir's camp and all her property was confiscated. Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (MS), Vol. II, pp. 31a-31b. Ghulam Ali Khan, Shah Alam Nama, p. 26.

6. The ruin of Delhi.
7. Rebellion of Prince Ali Gauhar.
8. The imprisonment of Khan Khanan Intizam-ud-daula and the confinement of other princes within the fort.
9. The coming of Prince Ali Gauhar to the court to meet his father at his summons. Betrayal by his followers and the fleeing of Ali Gauhar towards east.
10. The enthronement of Ali Gauhar as the Emperor.
11. The Imprisonment of Khan-khanan Intizam-ud-daula and the throwing out of the Princes from the fort.

Dattaji's Sindhia's Campaign In the North 1759-1760:

During the intervening period between the fifth (i.e. 1757) and sixth (i.e. 1761) invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Marathas came and encamped in the environs of Delhi on 26 Dec. 1758.¹ According to Mir the Maratha^s invasion of the north was a great calamity that befell on the people of Delhi. The Emperor and the wazir were terrified and they negotiated for peace. At last an agreement was reached on 29 January 1759 and peace returned to

1. Zikr, p. 71, Fall of the Mughal Empire Vol II,
p. 139 - 141

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 Delhi. Dattaji turned against Najib Khan, the Rohilla, and a fierce battle ensued between the Marathas and the Rohillas on the bank of Ganga on 15 September 1759.

Mir in forms us that while the Marathas were engaged in a conflict with the Rohilla, a Council of the nobles was held at the vazir's mansion to discuss the problem of defence. It was universally feared that the Marathas while returning from the campaign would attack Delhi. It was decided that efforts should be made either to eliminate Najib Khan or to settle ^{for} peace between them.

Murder of Alangir II and Intizam-ud-daula, 29 November 1759:

The vazir forwarded the plan to the emperor Alangir II and requested him to join in, but the Emperor evaded joining in, giving a lame excuse of being ill. The people as well as the vazir were suspicious of the Emperor's intentions²

1. Zikr, p. 71

2. In fact, while the Marathas under the leadership of Dattaji were still busy fighting the Rohilla Najib-ud-daula at Sukkatal in 1757, news was received, that the Abdalis had again entered Punjab and the Maratha governor of Lahore, Sabaji Sindhia, had bowed before them and on receiving this news, gave up the seige of Sukkatal in the middle and so now Imad was afraid of leaving the Emperor in Delhi to be captured by the Abdali and used as his tool against the vazir, as had been done in 1757. Sivav-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 907.

and so they decided to eliminate him and Intizam-ud-daula¹ completely.

Mir, describing the murder of Alamgir II, says, that some of the wazir's servants and the Raja (Raja Nagar Mal) met the Emperor and tried to convince him that they did not like the wazir but were serving him just for show, and assured him that there was a good opportunity to get rid off him. Mir says that simpleton was tricked² by these cunning people. They tempted the Emperor Alamgir II to visit the Kotila of Feroz Shah, by falsely telling him that a very saintly darvesh possessed of miracle - working power had come from Lahore and taken up residence there. They tempted the Emperor Alamgir II to meet the

1. Zikr, p. 81.

2. According to Siyar-ul-Mutakbherin, Vol. III, p. 907, Mahdi Quli Khan Kashmiri, was sent to tempt the Emperor to believe the story of the coming of a mystic at Kohtila, whereas Sarkar has given a different story. According to him, Zafarullah Khan at the command of Mahdi Quli Khan, the chief adviser of Inad tempted the Emperor Alamgir II to visit Kohtila Feroz Shah. Mir has differed from both these accounts. He has not pointed out a particular name, but has said that the Raja, with some servants of Inad met the Emperor. Zikr, p. 82.

mystic in order to overcome his difficulties, probably the mystic's prayer and blessings would help him. The Emperor being totally unaware of the plot, promised to meet him the following day. In the evening when the Emperor was entering the tent erected for this purpose, to meet the mystic, one of the men from the party stabbed¹ him to death. His corpse was flung on the river bank, below the Kohtila. For several days it lay there. At last some of the Emperor's relatives buried him at night without even mourning, for fear of these butchers.

Then they turned to Khan Khanan Intizam-ud-daula,³ who was strangled to death while he was saying his prayer and his corpse was thrown into the river. The next day the

1. Ibid. The Emperor was stabbed to death on 29th November 1759 by Balabash Khan, the wazir's captain of Central Asian troops. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 907; Shah Alam Nama, pp. 90-93.
2. He was buried in Humayun's Tomb. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin Vol. III, p. 907.
3. He was murdered on 29th November 1759. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 907. Mir has not given the dates of the murder of Alamgir II and Intizam-ud-daula.

regicides crowned Shahjahan II¹ as the new Emperor. Mir has recorded that the reign of Alamgir II lasted for² seven years.

Contest Between The Maratha And Abdali's 1759 to 1760:

Mir has given a detailed account of the contest between the Marathas and Durrani from 1759 to 1760, i.e. the years before the historic battle of Panipat. According to Mir, the wazir as soon as he got respite from the murder of Alamgir II and Intizam-ud-daula, he hurried³ back and joined Najib-ud-daula. Not even a week had passed when the news was received that the Abdali troops had reached Attock and Sabaji, the Maratha governor of Lahore, had⁴ submitted to him. The Marathas were alarmed,

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1. Muhi-ul-Milat, son of Muhi-us-Sunnat and grandson of Kam Baksh (the youngest son of Aurangzeb) was crowned on November 1759 as the new Emperor under the title of Shahjahan II. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. II, p. 907; Shah Alam Nama, p. 95. Mir has not dealt with the ancestry of Shahjahan II nor has he made it clear that Shahjahan II was the title given to Muhi-ul-Milat. Zikr, p. 81.
 2. According to Ghulam Ali Khan, the duration of Alamgir II reign was five years and some months. Shah Alam Nama, p. 95.
 3. The seige of Sukkartal in Nov. 1759. Mir has not given a single date for all these events and has also omitted the names of important battles, which are to be found in other contemporary sources, as for instance he has never mentioned the name of Sukkartal, but has always referred to this seige. Then while the leading part in this seige, on the Marathas side, was taken by Dattaji, Mir has not mention^{ed} his name even once.
 4. Sabaji submitted on 8th Nov. 1759. Zikr, p. 83.

they abandoned the seige of Sukkartal, the stronghold of Najib-ud-daula¹, and crossed the Jamuna near Panipat plundering and devastating everything on way, reached Karnal, a famous town, having the tomb of the famous Shah Bu Ali Qalandar.² By evening the Abdali troops reached the banks of the river. The Marathas also forged ahead, according to Mir nearly 8,000 Maratha horse advanced to face the invading troops of the Abdalis. The Abdali's proved superior for the Marathas. The boldest and the strongest Maratha leaders were killed and hundreds of soldiers were slaughtered. Mir says that the sight of battle-field made the hearts tremble in fear, he adds 'let us be thankful that the Abdali's did not proceed to Hissar, had they done so, not a person would have been left alive.' From here the Abdali Shah forded the river Jamuna and entered the Doab.³

Battle Of Bararighat, Dattaji Slain, January 1760:

As soon as Abdali Shah reached Doab, Najib-ud-daula came and joined him. The Marathas left the Wazir

1. Zikr, p. 81.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. p. 84 Ahmad Shah Abdali proceeded towards Doab on 25th December 1759.

to set up police posts and strengthen the security of the city, and themselves came and encamped on the eastern bank of Jamuna. On the other hand, the wazir after setting up security guards at the city gave the charge of the palace of Dara Shikoh, which was situated on the bank^g of the river, and himself came to the court of the new emperor Shahjahan II.¹

Mir writes that four days after this settlement² the Rohilla and Afghan troops reached the river. The Rohilla infantry led the van. Dattaji, the seasoned Maratha sardar, fought with great courage, but unfortunately in the very first attack an arrow hit him which proved fatal.³ The Maratha army was unnerved at this incident and

1. Zikr, p. 90.

2. On 9th January 1760, Najib-ud-daula crossed the river, leading the van and the Durrani being in the rear. The cavalry action was impossible, so the Rohilla chiefs came mounted on elephants. Sabaji, headed one wing of the Maratha troops, immediately engaged the enemy but was driven back by the pressure of number and dominance of the musketry fire over sword and spear. He waged this losing battle for an hour, when Dattaji came up with reinforcements to restore the battle. He was successful for a time, to force the victorious Rohillas back. Nuruddin, Life of Najib-ud-daula tr. by J.N. Sarkar, Indian Historical Quarterly and Islamic Culture (1933) 298-31a.

3. According to Nuruddin, the Rohilla Sharpshooters were lying concealed in the bushes with loaded muskets. As the horse of Dattaji ploughed its way up the loose sand on the bank of the nala, the Afghan issails rang out at point blank range and Dattaji fell down with a bullet through his eye. Ibid., p. 30b, but according to Mir the arrow wounded proved fatal.

began to retreat. The wazir left his officers on the police posts and joined ~~in~~ the Marathas. The Durrani gave chase to the fleeing Maratha troops and there was a heavy slaughter and indulged in extortion and plunder¹ of the city.

Malhar Rao Routed Near Sikandrabad by Jahan Khan, 1760:

In continuation of the Battle of Barari Ghat, Mir relating the story of Malhar Holkar's route, says that while the Durrani were still busy with the extortion and plunder, reports came in, that the vanquished Maratha troops had joined their camp at Mewat and they had evil intentions, Shah Abdali decided to meet the challenge. He dethroned Shahjahan II, who had been in power only for a few months² and left Jawan Bakht, son of Ali Gauhar, in charge of the capital. Meanwhile Imad-ul-Mulk on hearing the ruin of the Marathas, left Delhi and took refuge at Suraj Mal's fort. When the Abdali troops reached Mewat,

1. Zikr, pp. 84-85.

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the Marathas, seeing no hopes of the victory in the battle against the Abdalis they left the place, forded¹ the river and reached the Doab on 27th February 1760.

Now Abdali sent a force under his best general Jahan Khan, and later he himself joined him with an army of about 3000. The Marathas could not resist for long,² and their leader Malhar Holkar left the ground. Shah Abdali followed them upto Koil (Aligarh), a famous town. The Marathas stopped for about two three days at Suraj Mal's fort and then proceeded forward. Abdali occupied one of the forts of Suraj Mal, which was situated opposite river Jamuna and his soldiers inflicted hardships on the people. Suraj Mal did not see any gains in helping the Marathas, so he kept aloof. Ultimately the Marathas

1. Abdali moved to Mewat on 11 February 1760 where Malhar was reported to have gone. But the Marathas vanished into the North and Abdali proceeded to Riwari on 18th February. But there too no engagement between the two forces took place as the Marathas had moved further and reached Kalka Devi from where they crossed and encamped in Doab on 27th February 1760.
2. Three high officers -- Ahmad Ram Jadav, Shethyaji Kharade and his son -- besides many common soldiers fell in the battle --- Siyar-ul Mutakhharien, Vol. III, p. 912.

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sued for peace.

Capture of Delhi By Bhau. 3rd August 1760 :

Mir also narrates the capture of Delhi by Bhau. According to him, while the Abdali troops were still at Doab, news of the arrival of a new Maratha army under Bhau, was received in June 1760. Najib-ud-daula invited the governors of eastern districts for Eg. Shuja-ud-daula, Ahmad Khan Bangash and Hafiz Rahmat Khan and promised to give them a share in return for their help in fighting the Marathas.²

1. Suraj Mal had built and richly stored the fort of Ramgarh (now called Aligarh) intending to make it a second Kumbher in the midst of his Doab possessions and Govind Balab, the Maratha governor of the tract immediately south of it had planned (middle of May) to capture this fort and replace Jat rule by his own in this region. Though his design could not be put into execution, this unfriendly attitude could not be kept a secret from Suraj Mal. When Bhau entered the Jat territory on 8th June 1760 and showed friendly gestures to the Raja, even the friendly overtures and courteous gestures made by Bhau, after entering the Jat territory in June 1760, failed to assuage the apprehensions of Suraj Mal. The Raja rightly feared that after the expulsion of Abdalis, the Marathas would not spare him, and in the first opportunity deprive him of his wealth and possessions. So he decided to keep himself aloof from the impending war between the Marathas and Afghans. Imad-us Sadaq, pp. 180-181.

2. Zikr, p.89.

In the meantime Bahu passed through the territories of Raja Suraj Mal. Here Raja Suraj Mal and the wazir befriended Bhanu, who captured Delhi, with his help on 3rd August 1760. Yakub Ali Khan, a cousin of Shah Wali Khan, the wazir of Shah Abdali, in charge of the Shahi Qila, hoping that Ahmad Shah Abdali, encamped at the opposite bank of Jamuna would come to his help, launched an offensive against the Marathas. The Marathas laid seige to the fort and finally captured it. Many of the palatial buildings, which were unparalleled in their beauty, were razed to the ground.¹

Since the river was flooded, it was impossible for Abdali Shah to come to Yakub Ali's aid. Realizing this fact Yakub Ali begged for terms of peace, according to which he was allowed to march out with his property and troops to join his master across the Jamuna.²

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1. Zikr, p. 89. Khazana-i-Amira, p.103. According to Azad Bilgrami Bhanu entered the fort and by breaking the ceilings obtained the silver which was minted producing coins worth about seventeen lakhs. Siyar-ul-Mutakb-kharin, Vol. III, p. 912. Ahwat-i-Najib-ud-Daula, pp. 33b-34a.
 2. Ibid., Bhanu's capture of Delhi, Nuruddin - Life of Najib-ud-daula, tr. by J.N. Sarkar, Islamic Culture (1933), p. 33, Siyar-ul-Mutakb-kharin, Vol. III, pp. 911-12.

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Battle of Panipat January 1761:

Regarding the affairs of Marathas in the north, Mir has maintained some sequence, and has given a detailed account of the third battle of Panipat, inserting his own opinions here and there.

Here the news was received (by the Marathas) that the faujdar of Sirhind Samad Khan, a long with some ² samindars and a large army was advancing towards Delhi and were to join the Abdali troops. Bhau, the Maratha general who was a self-conceited man and considered no one equal to him, left his extra luggage in the fort of Shahjahanabad and proceeded in that direction. While he was on his way to challenge the Abdalis, he cherished the idea that the wazir was quite wealthy and Raja Suraj Mal was a well to do Raja, so if ever he got an opportunity he would try to grab, whatever he could from these two. Raja Nagar Mal came to know about his intentions from a

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1. For details of Battle of Panipat see Khasana-i-Amira, pp. 104-108. Tarikh-i-Muzzaffari (MS), p. 90b-176a.
 2. Zikr, p. 93, Abdus Samad Khan, the Durrani governor of Sirhind, Mian Qutub Shah, the preceptor and ally of Indian Rohillas with about 2,000 men. There were at least 8,000 more fighters within ~~them~~ them.

meeting of his (Bhau's) Sardars. The Maratha Sardar sent a message to the Raja saying that he would entrust the administration of the conquered territory to Suraj Mal. But the Raja rejected the offer on the ground that he had been, for long associated with the wazir, thus it would not be possible for him to disappoint the wazir.

Suraj Mal and he, on the day of the march of the Marathas, moved forward and encamped at Ballamgarh. The Wazir accompanied his bag and baggage that was sent with the advance guards. In spite of all the endeavours made by the Marathas to win him over, Suraj Mal did not join the Maratha army.

Mir says that the Deccani Sardar (Bhau), who was very brave and was proud of his military power and did not care for a handful of the soldiers of the North, was very annoyed at the betrayal of Raja and wazir and in a fit of rage... remarked, "The flame of their rule was already flickering and that he had not come all the way from south relying mainly on their help, but he would be able to crush them in no time." However, he postponed his offensive against them for some other time, and contented himself by capturing the fort of Najabat Khan, and killed

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Abdus Samad Khan on 17th October 1760.

This victory inspired the Marathas to intensifyⁿ their aggressive activity with undaunted spirit. They advanced further and encamped near Panipat to fight the Afghan invader. When the Jamuna became fordable, Ahmad Shah, along with his allies belonging to the region of east of Delhi forded the river on 1st November 1760, arrived at a place five miles nearer to Panipat, fully prepared to face the Marathas. But before the actual² battle of Panipat began, news came in that Govind Pandit

1. Zikr, p. 93.

As the Maratha soldiers and ~~their soldiers~~ were starving Bhau decided to capture Kunjpura, which possessed in abundance, all kinds of provisions and at the same time occupied a strategic position. He reached Kunjpura on 16th October 1760, which was defended by about ten thousand men but the defenders were overpowered by the Marathas. Abdus Samad Khan was killed. Qutub Shah wounded. Marathas entered the town. Immense booty fell into the hands of Bhau. "Two hundred thousand maunds of wheat and other goods of a value of ten lakhs, and six and a half lakhs of rupees in cash. So vast was the quantity of the captured provisions that the Maratha troops were paid their weekly subsistence in grain." For details see, Khazan-a-i Amira, p. 106, Siyar-ul-Mutakbberin, Vol. III, p. 912; Ahwal-i-Najib-ud-daula, pp. 34-35.

2. Ibid., p. 94.

Govind Ballal, Brahman was the Maratha revenue collector. He had moved up from his headquarters at Etawa and was ravaging the estates of Najib-ud-daula. The news of Govind Ballal's move spread consternation (Continued on next page.....)

was marching post-haste at the head of a huge force to join the main army, at Panipat. Forthwith, a Durrani general was sent to check and overwhelm him. In a sharp encounter Govind Pandit was defeated and killed, his army routed and his baggage plundered^m, 17 December 1760.

Mir holds that if the Marathas had kept themselves to the old tactics of Guerilla warfare, they had a chance to win the war. Whereas, the Marathas stuck to their artillery in the centre, inactive and immobile, while the Afghans blockaded the supply of food and fodder

Continued from previous page

among the Indo-Afghan allies of Ahmad Shah Abdali for the safety of their defenceless home. It was at their entreaty that the Shah detached a force of five thousand horse under the command of Haji Atai Khan and Karimdad Khan, crossing the Jamuna near Baghpat, they swooped down upon Shahdara near Delhi and cut down the Maratha outposts in the evening of 16 Dec. 1760. Next morning the Afghan cavalry burst upon him in overwhelming force, without any appreciable resistance, the Marathas took to flight. Govind Ballal was shot dead and his head was cut off to be carried to the Shah. Vast quantities of grain and other stores fell in the hands of Afghans. For details Ahwal-i-Najib-ud-daula, pp. 40b-46b, Siyar-ul-Mutakabbirin, Vol. III, p. 913, Khasana-i-Amira, pp. 107-108.

to the Maratha camp. Thus the starving Maratha army decided on fighting on 13th January 1761.

The battle started with a cannonade from Maratha guns. A fierce battle ensued and a heap of corpses was formed in no time. Despite the heavy odds, the Maratha Sardar, Bhau, delivered counter attacks and fought gallantly and was successful in pushing back a number of Afghan regiments. According to Mir, it seemed that the fate had decided in favour of Ahmad Shah Abdali. Many of the leading generals of the Maratha army were killed. In the first attack itself Vishvas Rao, the heir to the Peshwa throne, was shot dead. Bhau was much shocked by

1. Zikr, p. 96.

So great was the loss inflicted on Marathas by the Abdali's, that 28,000 bodies in thirty-two heaps were counted, in addition to those lying in the ditch round their camp. Ahwal-i-Najib-ud-daula, 50b-51a; Khasana-i-Amira, pp. 108-109; Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 914.

2. Vishvas Rao, Bhau, Jaswant Rao, Pilaji Jadav, Tukoji Sindhia, Santaji Wagh and several other captains perished in the historical battle.
3. At about half past two Vishvas Rao, the heir apparent of the Maratha throne, was shot dead. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 914.

this incident and he made it a point of honour, saying that he could not show his face to the Marathas at Pune, after having lost Vishwas Rao, who was entrusted to him. Now he led a last desperate charge and was killed¹. Malhar also fled with about three thousand cavalry.

Mir has ended the description of the battle of Panipat at this and then proceeded to give a more vivid account of the pitiable state of the vanquished army. It was thus --

Sufferings Of The Fugitives :

The fugitives fled from Panipat, worn out with exhaustion and hunger. The half-clad soldiers presented a sight to the natives. Thousands perished in this condition. The villagers pitying the poor soldiers distributed

1. Zikr, p. 97.

At the news of Vishwas Rao's death Bhau led a last desperate attack upon the Afghans, with a handful of his followers. He received a spear wound and was thrown off his horse by a bullet in the thigh. While walking with the help of a spear, he was challenged by five Durrani horsemen, who wished to rob him of his costly jewels and dress. Like a wounded lion, he fell upon his assailants and was killed by them. His head was cut off and carried away. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 914.

gram and thanked the Lord for being better off than these soldiers. Many of them died of hunger and cold. The troops, which the Marathas had left in reserve at the fort, had already fled in terror of the victorious
¹
 Afghans.

The Spoils Of Victors:

Mir has estimated that goods worth crores of
 rupees came in the hands of victors, (the eastern sardars)
²
 who distributed it among themselves. Innumerable camels and horses were taken away by Shuja-ud-daula and others. The Durrani troopers, who were poor, now suddenly turned rich. Every Dah-bashi obtained goods equal to load of a

1. Zikr, p. 97.

2. The cash and jewellery were beyond calculation. The total loss of Marathas after the battle is put at 50,000 horses, either captured by the Afghan army or the villagers along the route of flight. Two hundred thousand draught cattle, some thousands of camels, five hundred elephants, besides cash and jewellery. Sivār-ul Mutakbkhārīn, Vol. III, p. 914; Ahwal-e Naib-ud-daula, p. 50b.

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hundred camels, and each one received two ponies. The Afghan army was laden with incalculable riches.

After this overwhelming victory, the Abdali Shah entered the city with great pomp and ceremony, and he issued farmans to the neighbouring Princes and chiefs summoning them to the court. One, such farman was also sent to Raja Nagarmal, who at once responded to the summon and paid homage to the new Emperor of Hindustan. Najib-ud-daula came to the court to introduce the chiefs and amirs to Shah, and they were presented to the Shah by Shah Wali Khan, the Durrani wazir. This meeting was a pleasant one. Ahmad Shah gave him his seal² and appointed Najib-ud-daula as the new wazir.

1. According to Ghulam Hussain each trooper brought away ten and sometimes twenty camels laden with money, Whereas Mir has pointed out that each trooper brought about hundred camels laden with money. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 914; Zikr, p. 98 respectively.

2. Zikr, p. 98.

Mir has not been very clear about the arrangement of office made by Abdali, before leaving for Afghanistan in April 1761.

According to other sources the Abdali's parting instructions were that Shah Alam should be recognised as the Emperor, Imad, re-appointed Wazir and Najib Mir-bakshi. For details see, Ahwal-i Najib-ud-daula, 54-55b; Sardesai - New History of the Maratha, pp. 445-56; Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 912.

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Ahmad Shah Durrani's Returns To Kabul March 1761:

From the plans and aims of Ahmad Shah Durrani it was evident that the Afghan king would not stay for long in India after his victory over the Marathas in Panipat. The more he delayed his departure, the more would his soldiery be dissatisfied and political problems complicated at Kabul. Nevertheless, his Indian allies insisted on him to push the advantage of his victory further and carry his arms to new places to wipe out the last traces of opposition to his military supremacy. Yielding to their pressure, he asked his Wazir Shah Wali, to march in company with Raja Nagar Mal to conquer and plunder the Jat lands. But the Afghan soldiers, anxious to return home and meet their families, refused to obey their commands of their master and opposed every such move that further put off their journey back to Kabul.

The Shah, therefore decided to abandon his venture of attacking other places and called back his wazir and generals. Soon a proclamation was issued that he would

1. Zikr, pp. 100-102.

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march back to Qandhar along with his army and his entire baggage including the spoils of a hard earned victory. Two days before his departure Abdali had permitted Shuja-ud-daula and the Rajah to leave for their respective headquarters. He proclaimed Prince Jawan Bakht as the heir-apparent in the absence of his father Shah Alam, and appointed Najib-ud-daula as the regent of Delhi in February 1761. On his way back he appointed Zain Khan his own clansman, the subedar of Sirhind and having made all these arrangements he advanced towards Lahore.

The Afghan Army is Harried and Harassed by the Sikhs:

Mir says that his spectacular victory at Panipat had turned the head of Ahmad Shah, who in his pride concluded that no power was left in North India which could challenge the might of his arms. His arrogance and ⁷isolence

1. Zikr, p. 100.

On 13 March 1761, he sent his pesh-khaima or advance tents and baggage, and left the city of Delhi on 20 March 1761, and began his homeward march on 22 March, arriving at Ambala five days later. Khazana-i-Amira, p. 113. Ahwal-i Najib-ud-daula, pp. 52b-53b.

2. He was appointed on 29 March 1761. Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (MS) Vol. II, pp. 43a-43b. Ahmad Shah Durrani, p. 265.

blinded him to the hazards that lay ahead, on his march back home. He was absolutely in the dark as to the locust swarms which were to descend from an unknown direction on his wornout army, laden with ill-gotten wealth, and would¹ harry and harass them beyond endurance. This was verily a kind of punishment, which God inflicted on the Afghans and their king for the cruelties they had committed on the people of Delhi.

These were the Sikhs numbering forty to fifty thousand horsemen who issued forth from different corners of the countryside to surround and attack the Afghans, unprepared to fight and to finish with them. Every morning the Sikhs would insite the Afghans and by evening would attack them from all sides. In short the Sikhs harrassed

1. Zikr, p. 101.

According to other records the Sikhs under the command of Sardar Jassa Singh Alhuwalia surprised the Afghans at Goindwal, on the right bank of Beas, and succeeded in releasing from their clutches as many as two thousand and two hundred captives, who were restored by them to their homes. And the reason given by Mir for the inability of Ahmad Shah Abdali to take effective measures against the Sikhs has also been recorded by other sources, i.e. because he was encumbured with heavy baggage and booty and had to return home before summer. Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (MS), Vol. II, pp. 43a-43b. For details see Kanhayalal, Tarikh-i-Punjab, pp. 102-103, Ahmad Shah Durrani, p. 264.

The Abdalis to the utmost limit. Describing the terrorist activities of the Sikhs Mir says that, that tribes was so bold and brave that they flashed their swords on the Abdali horsemen, whose stirrups were soaked in blood.

The amateur Sikh sepoys captured the veteran sharpshooters¹ of Abdali and put them to various hardships. Thus the Sikhs insulted and humiliated the Durrani to such an extent that whoever heard of these blows struck at the Afghans by the Sikhs, lost all respect for them and consequently their prestige declined.² Mir has stressed on the point that the Abdalis had no strength left to face the Sikhs in the open battle field and they had no other thought but to flee from this oppressive scene. They conferred the Nizamat of the city to a Hindu and proceeded towards³ their own country.

The Sikhs went after them plundering and laying waste to everything on way, and reached upto river Attock.

1. Zikr, p. 101.

2. Ibid., pp. 101-102.

3. Ibid. Mir has omitted the name of the Hindu chief who, according to Kanhaiyalal was Ghumand Chand Katauch. He was given the government of Doaba Bist Jullundhur, with Saadat Khan and Sadiq Khan Afrifi and his deputies. The Shah then returned to Afghanistan.
Tarikh-i Punjab, pp. 82-84.

After completely overpowering the Abdali troops, they held sway over the city, whose annual income was two crores. A few days later they murdered the Hindu governor in the city¹ of Lahore and established their rule over whole of Punjab.

Since there existed no legally constituted authority that could check this devastation in the city, the Sikhs divided the whole area among themselves, and began to enjoy the fruits of power and wealth flowing from their undisputed dominance. Unfamiliar with the basic principles of administration, they started granting concessions to the² peasants and seized the treasures from the people.

Rebellion of Suraj Mal Jat 1761 :

Suraj Mal a powerful and renowned Jat samindar, whose ancestors had always enjoyed the patronage of the Mughal court, held the rahdari of Akbarabad and Shahjahana-
bad. He, like the other regional chiefs, taking advantage of

1. The Sikhs proclaimed Sardar Jhassa Singh as king of Lahore with the title of Sultan-ul-Qaum.
Khasana-i Amira, p. 114.

2. Zikr, p. 102.

the weakness and carelessness of the Muslim zamindars, increased his power by capturing some forts. He easily took possession of Agra fort¹ because the qiladar surrendered it without putting a stout defence on 12 June 1761. As it was a major territorial loss to the Empire, Shah Alam, urged by Shuja-ud-daula, planned to lead a punitive expedition against the rebel. The word went round that the emperor

1. Zikr, p. 102.

From Ahmad Shah's fourth invasion in 1757 to his retreat in 1761, Suraj Mal passed through a most critical period, as his home was nearest the danger zone and he had the fatal reputation of being excessively rich. But at the end of this period, he emerged, with his territory unimpaired, his treasury untouched and his forces undiminished. This success was due to his marvellous sagacity, patience and diplomatic shrewdness. He utilized this opportunity in expanding the frontiers of his kingdom by capturing Agra, which had not been visited by the invading armies by Ahmad Shah, and it was there that rich fugitives from Delhi and its environs had taken shelter.

The Agra fort was held by the qiladar directly under the Emperor. He and the garrison had received no pay for two years past and had kept off starvation only by selling the vessels of precious metal from imperial stores. Suraj Mal's first attack on Agra fort was easily repulsed, but then he laid regular siege to the fort. Within a month the qiladar opened the gates (on 12 June 1761) on being promised one lakh of rupees in cash and five villages.

According to Harcharandas - Qiladar Fazil Khan remained faithful to his charge but Musa Khan, the keeper of the gate allowed them to enter after accepting a bribe of three lakhs of rupees. Ghahar-Gulzar-e-Shuja, f.45. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 318.

was advancing to punish the rebel Suraj Mal. The Raja came out to defend the fort and in the meantime wrote to Raja Nagar Mal that his presence was necessary there. Raja Nagarmal, who in Mir's opinion, was a great opportunist, and was adept in the art of arbitration, sent a messenger to the emperor, for negotiations of peace and sent the troops back.

After this incident Mir went to Akbarabad for a second time after about thirty years,¹ and visited the tombs of his ancestors. He saw the effects of the Jat invasion on the city. He writes that he went every morning and evening to the bank of river, and spent hours together at that beautiful place, where there were gardens on one side and beautiful mansions and houses of the nobles and samindars on the other. His fame as a poet had spread far and wide and a number of nobles, samindars, poets and scholars came to meet him. But alas! he was not satisfied with the meetings. For he recalls that once before, that

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1. Mir says that he went to Agra for the second time after Suraj Mal's rebellion in 1761, after about 30 years. But this statement is contradicted by the fact that he had lived at Delhi only for twenty two years, coming there from Agra in 1739. He now visited Agra second time in 1761.

city was full of scholars, poets, mystics, geniuses, physicians, advocates, pandits, Maulvis, Hafiz, Qari, Imams, Muazzins and schools, Khangahs, madarsas, gardens; and that day he could hardly find any scholar with whom he could enjoy the discussions. Mir is very explicit in describing the ruins of Agra at the hands of Jats. He found the city completely deserted and haunted. ¹ It disappointed him and he went back from his hometown after four months to the fort of Suraj Mal.

Death of Suraj Mal In The Battle With Nalib-ud-daula, 1763:

Jawahar Singh, the eldest son of Raja Suraj Mal, who had been dreaming of becoming the ruler of the Jat Kingdom for a long time and had rebelled against his father earlier, ² went to Farrukhanagar, a town situated three manzil

1. Zikr, pp. 103-104.

The Jats had arrested the wives and children of the garrison and plundered the houses immediately under the fort walls. It is estimated that Suraj Mal carried away 50 lakhs worth in this pillage, and enormous stores of artillery, munitions and articles of royal wardrobe which had accumulated in Agra for a long time past. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 318.

2. Ibid., p. 106.

The death of Badan Singh in 1756 had precipitated a civil war between the Rajah Suraj Mal and his impatient ambitious son Jawahir Singh. The remonstrances of the father only inflamed the passions of the Youth to achieve success in a trial of strength. He appeared

(Continued on next page....)

west of Shahjahanbad, the boundary of which was close to that of his father's estate. He invaded the samindar of Farrukhnagar, whose father was in the suburbs of Delhi. He put a vigorous defence, and fought for two months with courage and confidence to save his position. But before launching his offensive he consulted Raja Nagarmal who¹ dissuaded him from this hasty action. He urged him to stay back from the theatre of warfare for his presence would only spark the flames of war which would soon spread and consume the whole army. Najib-ud-daulah was standing ready on the other side to plunge at once in the blazing fire and do his utmost to destroy the Jats in fighting. He² should try to avert the war rather than precipitate it.

Continued from previous page....

with a strong army to capture the fort of Dig, but was outmanoeuvred by his father, who laid siege to it. In the fighting that ensued Jawahir Singh was wounded and arrested. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 926.

1. According to Nuruddin it was Najib-ud-daula who sent Raja Nagar Mal with his own personal servant Karamullah to Suraj Mal to pacify the Jat Rajah and dissuade him from fighting. Najib-ud-daula as the Dictator of Delhi, 1761-1770 (tr.) J.N. Sarkar, Islamic Culture 1933, p. 621.
But according to Mir's version Raja Suraj Mal consulted him before launching an offensive against Najib-ud-daula.
2. Zikr, p. 106.

Failing in his efforts to prevent Surajmal from marching to the battle-field, Rajah Nagarmal then advised him to refrain from risking his life in the fighting. He argued that according to the principle of statecraft, it was not advisable for a successful ruler to indulge personally in such a minor fray. He should as far as possible try to handle the situation cleverly through his subordinates. But Surajmal turned a deaf ear to all the persuasions of Raja Nagar Mal and coming upto the field with reinforcements arrested the Afghan general, Mausvi Khan on 12 December 1763 while the Jat troops laid waste to the village under his possession. The brothers of Mausvi Khan appealed to Najib to stop the destruction of their villages. But Suraj Mal turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances made by Najib-ud-daula and continued his march on Delhi. Even then Najib-ud-daula did not lose his balance of mind and closed the gates of the city.

Mir thinks that Najib-ud-Daulah was sincere in averting the showdown, and his sincerity can be proved by

1. Zikr, p. 101.

Najib-ud-daula had sent his mediators thrice, to dissuade Raja Suraj Mal from fighting, for he thought that war would only estrange Suraj Mal from him and it would not be wise to turn such a great captain as Suraj Mal into an enemy. Nuruddin, Life of Najib-ud-daula (tr. J.N. Sarkar, Islamic Culture (1933), pp. 620-622.

the fact that he, at this juncture, wrote to Suraj Mal that he had not taken out his troops because he had no intentions of fighting with him. But Suraj Mal seemed determined to wage a war on him. In a haughty and disdainful tone he replied that he would go back only after meeting the Nawab's troops in the field. So it would be better if he came out of the fort for he (Suraj Mal) had other business at hand, besides fighting him. This reply of Suraj Mal greatly enraged Najib, who then decided to show the arrogant Jat¹ his strength.

Early morning, the trumpets were sounded, Najib mounted the elephant, forded the river and moved to the battle-field. Furious fighting began with charges and counter-charges from ^{both} opposite side. When the Rohillas inflicted heavy casualties and completely routed the Jat army, Suraj Mal left the field with a small personal staff and attacked a contingent standing near the town. But he

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1. Mir has quoted an interesting story, which inspired Najib-ud-daulah to attack the Jats, and he was sure of his success. While Najib ordered his troops to ford the river, he slept peacefully and woke up quite excited about a dream. He had dreamt that a big crow was perched on a tree surrounded by a number of small crows making noises, he passed by that way and killed the crow in one shot. The rest of the crows left the dead crow. From this dream Najib-ud-daula inferred that his victory over the arrogant Jat Raja was certain and so, decided to attack him with full vigour on the following day. Zikr, pp. 107-108.

was ambushed and fired by a militia of the Rohillas who were hidden on the road side. The shot proved fatal and he, instantaneously fell dead in his ¹howda. It all happened so suddenly and unexpectedly that no one could know immediately about the event. So on the other fronts the Rohillas feared a surprise attack from Suraj Mal Jat in the darkness of night and so maintained strict vigilance ²throughout the night.

Spies were sent in all directions, but nowhere the Jat chief was traced out. However, some of them^{they} related that [^]had heard a few villagers discussing that it was a matter of shame for them to leave the body of the valiant noble Raja Suraj Mal in the battle field. It clearly meant that he was killed in the skirmish in the afternoon and that his troops had fled away. While the soldiers were still busy interpreting the contents of the news, a horseman came up with an amputated hand asserting that it was gory hand

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1. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 928.
Nuruddin, Life of Najib-ud-daula (tr.) J.N. Sarkar,
Islamic Culture (1933), pp. 623-625.
 2. Zikr, p. 109.
Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 928.

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of Suraj Mal. Having identified it they became convinced that Suraj Mal had been killed in action. With the exultant joy and enthusiasm, the Rohillas pursued the fleeing Jats, and seized their equipage.

Mir thinks that the Rohillas would have destroyed the Jat territory had they succeeded in fording the river that separated them from the land of the enemy. But it was saved by Raja Nagar Mal, who wrote to Najib not to advance any further and remain contented with the victory that had attended his arms. He warned him of the presence of a strong Jat force on the other side and in case it fought bravely, he would find himself in a difficult situation. Najib was a farsighted and shrewd diplomat; he accepted the Raja's advice and returned home.

2

Jawahir Singh's Accession And Preparations
of War Against Najib Khan 1763:

Jawahir Singh, son of Suraj Mal succeeded his father in 1763, and started preparations for war against Rohillas

1. Zikk, p. 110.

Mir has omitted the name of the person who finally identified the hand of Raja Suraj Mal. According to the author of Sivār-ul-Mutakhkherin it was finally identified by Yakub Ali Khan in the presence of Najib-ud-daula. He identified it from the Chintz sleeve of his tunic, which he himself had presented to Suraj Mal earlier. Sivār-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 928.

2. Ibid.

in order to avenge the death of his father.¹

Jawahir Singh's Attack on Delhi 1764:

Mir gives a brief account of Jawahir Singh's attack on Delhi and his subsequent fighting with Najib-ud-daula, the regent and Mir-bakshi of the empire. He says that Jawahir Singh along with Malhar Rao Holkar marched on to the capital and encamped outside it in November 1764. The scarcity of grain in the beleaguered city reached its extreme point. The plunder, bloodshed and this sort of fighting continued for about two months till February 1765. Imad-ul-Mulk came out of the fort of Bharatpur and sent the extra contingent to Farrukhabad and himself joined Jawahir Singh.²

1. Zikr, p. 110; Siyar-ul-Mutakbherin, Vol. III, p. 929. Chahar-Gulzar-e-Shujai (Rotograph), f. 44; Fall of The Mughal Empire, Vol. II, pp. 326-327, Nuruddin, Sarguzasht Nawab Najib-ud-daula, p. 41.

2. Zikr, p. 112. No dates of the battle have been given by Mir. Here there is a controversy, according to Mir Imad-ul-Mulk joined in on Jawahir's side but according to other records, Najib was completely besieged and began to run short of provisions but he held on grimly for Ahmad Shah Abdali had sent words that he was coming to his aid, besides Najib had secretly won over Malhar and Imad. Imad entered Delhi and went to Farrukhabad. Also see Najib-ud-daula (Article) 1739-70. K.A. Khalilur Rehman, Bengal Past and present, Vol. LXII (1942) p. 17. Najib-ud-daula as the Dictator of Delhi (Article), Sarkar, Islamic Culture (1933) pp. 625-626.

Peace negotiations were initiated on 4 February 1765 and the terms were speedily settled, when the news of Ahmad Shah's invasion of Punjab reached the combatants. He advanced upto Shahabad in October 1764 but being extremely harassed by the Sikhs returned without success in his plans.¹ The entire strategy collapsed and the issue of dispute between the two was settled by a treaty.²

Jawahir Singh Crushes His Refractory Chiefs, 1766 :

Imad-ull Mulk along with Malhar proceeded to Ahmad Khan Bangash, with whom, he was on friendly terms, in May 1766. Jawahir Singh went back to his capital and set himself to the task of crushing the old refractory chiefs, who since his father's time had been in revolt against the central

1. Ahmad Shah Abdali gave up the idea of marching to Sirhind and pursuing Sikhs and came upto Kunjpura evidently with a view to helping Najib-ud-daula, in his struggle against the Jats and the Sikhs. But by the middle of February 1765, peace had been concluded between the Rohillas and Jats and there was no purpose in moving southwards. Another thing that might have influenced the decision of the Shah, was the return of fifteen thousand Sikhs from the Jat-Rohilla campaign, who were then marching to their country. Qanungo, History of Jats, pp. 177-178. Ganda Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani, pp. 301-302.

2. Zikr, p. 112.

authority. He imprisoned some chiefs while murdered the
¹
 others.

Mir Qasim Seeks Shuja-ud-Daula's Help, 1763:

Mir has also given an account of the events relating to the armed conflicts between Shuja-ud-daula and East India Company in Bihar. Besides the old ambition to annex Bihar to his Awadh Kingdom, the situation arising out of the arrival of Mir Qasim in Lucknow forced the Nawab to lead an expedition to drive out the English from the province and establish his own authority in the name
²
 of the Mughal Emperor.

While sojourning in the fort of Bharatpur Mir had heard that a most disastrous battle had taken place between the British traders and Mir Qasim, the nazim of Bengal. According to Mir the public of Bengal had become disgusted with the acts and policies of Mir Qasim and so neither the people nor the leading zamindars of Bengal came to his help

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1. Zikr, p. 112. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, Vol. III, p. 928.
 2. Ibid., p. 105. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin, (Persian) Vol. II, pp. 744-745.

against the East India Company. Thus Mir Qasim along with his vanquished troops reached Azimabad, which was under his dominion. He tried to shut himself up in the town and give a battle to the English but his troops did not show any enthusiasm, and so he suffered defeat for a second time and on 19 November 1763 fled with his whole baggage towards Awadh. When Mir Qasim reached the outskirts of Benaras, he sent an envoy to Shuja-ud-daula beseeching his assistance against the English. He in return promised to bear the expenses of war.¹ Shuja-ud-daula asked him first to pay homage to the Mughal Emperor and settle the conditions of a joint front against the English in his court.

Mir Qasim, unaware of what the future had in store for him, crossed the river, with the remnant of his once grand army and his treasure. The people of Nawab Wazir's camp cast greedy looks on the treasure of Mir Qasim. And after a few days the Nawab robbed him of his gold, silver,

1. Zikr, p. 105.

He is said to have agreed to pay a sum of rupees three crores on the successful conclusion of the expedition. Siyar-ul-Mutakhhherin (Persian), Vol. II, p. 746, Imad-us-Sa'adat, p. 93, says that Qasim agreed to pay one lakh per day when the army was on march and fifty thousand per day while in camp. Siyar's figure can be taken as being more reliable as the author was at that time in Benaras and thus must have had a first rate information.

camels, horses, and the magnificent carpets and the gorgeous robes. Those who had acted as mediators did not come to his rescue. Thus in stead of receiving help, he was deprived of whatever he possessed at that time.¹ When at last he did implore assistance from Nawab Wazir Shuja-ud-daula, Bahu Begam fixed some subsistence allowance for him.

²
Battle of Panch Pahari 3 May 1764:

Mir has omitted the details of this battle but has concentrated more on the circumstances which flared up the hostilities. It appears from the account that the English had tried to avert the clash till the last moment and it could have been avoided, had it not been precipitated by Shuja-ud-daula and Mir Qasim.

Mir writes: - Shuja-ud-daula at the advice and instigation of some of his inexperienced confidants, calculated that if subah Azimabad could be seized by a little effort, it would be a worthwhile gain. With this aim Shuja-ud-daula marched in company of the Emperor towards Patna. The English

1. Zikr, p. 106.

2. No name of the battle has been given by Mir. For details of battle Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian) Vol. II, pp. 740-750.

governor after settling the affairs of the subah of Bengal, wrote to Shuja -- "we have settled the scores with the one we had to. Now we are not concerned with the Nawab and the Emperor. Then what is the meaning of this advancement by Shuja-ud-daula? who is responsible for this provocation? If you want us to be friendly we are ready, what is the use of fighting unnecessarily?" Then the English tried to dissuade him from starting a fight arguing that if he had been instigated by some inexperienced and arrogant people, and he thought that he would be benefitted in any way, by fighting against them then they were helpless.

But this letter did not cause any change in the attitude of the Nawab; the persuasion was rather attributed to the weakness of the English and therefore, Shuja's counsellors promoted him to go ahead with the plan. When the two armies met in the environs of Azimabad and the English opened fire, the disloyal and greedy servants of the Nawab fell on the treasury of the state. A severe engagement took place. Isa, of nawabs army, fought gallantly but

1. Zikr, p. 110.

2. He was the principal officer of nawab's army. His real name was Shuja Quli Khan illias 'Mian Isa'. In the battle of Panch Pahari 3 May 1764, he displayed much gallantry but was killed. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin(P)Vol. II, p.740.

was killed. The emperor remained a silent spectator in the battle. The result was that the nawab lost the battle.¹ The nawab who was engaged somewhere near the city, thought it better to retreat than to come to terms. Thus he turned back to his province. He covered the long distance within one and a half day and collecting money and munitions from there he proceeded to Farrukhabad.²

Regarding the results of this battle Mir says that though this mortal world is not the place, where a person is quickly punished for his sins, but still, the defeat of this huge army of the nawab by the English was nothing but a retribution for the betrayal of Mir Qasim, by him.

1. Zikr, p. 111.

Mir has recorded the inertness of the emperor only in the battle but according to other sources, Mir Qasim, Emperor and Beni Bahadur had all remained inert in the battle. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. II, pp. 749-750, Chahar Gulzar-i Shujai (MS), 220b-221a.

2. Mir has not specified the place from where Shuja-ud-daula proceeded to Farrukhabad whether it was Faizabad or Lucknow. According to Ghulam Hussain Shuja left Lucknow for Farrukhabad on 31 January 1764, in order to form an offensive alliance against the English with the Rohillas. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. II, pp. 765-766, Chahar -Gulzar-e-Shujai (Ms), pp. 220b-221a.

In the meantime, the English captured their camps and carried away all their belongings. Taking the Emperor along with them they reached Lucknow, the capital of Shuja-ud-daula's province. But they did not harm even a single inhabitant, an act of thankfulness to God, for such an overwhelming victory. After about a week's stay, they fixed two lakhs per month for the emperor as his allowance.

Shuja-ud-daula In Rohilkhand- 1765:

After his retreat from Lucknow Shuja-ud-daula fled to Farrukhabad for protection and sought aid from the Rohillas. But he was disappointed in his expectations by the chiefs of Farrukhabad. Then he turned to the Marathas for help and entered into an alliance with their leader Holkar to fight with English and retrieve his position.

1. Zikr, p. 112.

This account of Mir agrees with the account of Harcharan-das, the celebrated author of Chahar-Gulzar-i Shujai and a partisan of Shuja-ud-daula, who has written that when the English marched to Lucknow and brought the villages and towns of subahs of Awadh and Allahabad under their domination, they did not at all oppress the people, did not in any way interfere in their affairs. Chahar-Gulzar-i-Shujai (I), pp.220b-221a.

2. According to Siyar-ul Mutakhkherin (Persian) Vol. II, p. 81. the 26 lakhs of rupees per annum was fixed.

3. Shuja-ud-daula promised, as the price of Maratha assistance the cession to Holkar of the Parganas which his father Safdarjang had made over to him in 1752 but which has been re-occupied by the Wazir after the defeat of the Marathas

Continued on next page.

In the battle of Kora fought on 3 May 1765, the Marathas failed to come up to the level of the English as they could not stand the accurate and steady fire from the British guns and a few rounds speedily threw their ranks into confusion. The Marathas retreated in disorder and within two or three days reached Gwalior, their capital. However they turned towards the Jat territory to recover the loss¹ they had suffered in this engagement.

Shuja-ud-daula Sues For Peace:

After this defeat Shuja-ud-daula's hopes of improving his position shattered and his spirits completely broken, decided to throw himself at their mercy. The English gave² him back his subahs and left for Azimabad.

Jat - Maratha Relations 1766 :

Mir has dealt with the Jat-Maratha relation in detail. The Marathas under the leadership of Holkar invaded the

From previous page

at Panipat, besides a payment of fifteen lakh cash after their victory over the enemy, and as for the day to day expenses of the Maratha army, it was agreed that the wazir would pay at the rate of 30,000 rupees per day. Imad-us-Saadat, p. 97, Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. II, p. 237. Khair-ud-din, Ibratnama, (R), p. 146.

1. Zikr, pp. 113-114. For details of battle see Imad-us-Saadat, pp. 97-98, Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. II, p. 768.
2. Zikr, p. 114.

territory of Jawahir Singh who had failed to live up to his commitments with them.¹ But he boldly faced the challenge. He marshalled a strong army consisting of the Jats and the Sikhs and in the hotly contested engagement the Marathas were badly defeated. Numerous Marathas were killed while five hundred of them were made captives. Malhar, in Mir's² opinion, could not survive this disaster and died in May 1766.

But soon after the death of Malhar, Raghunath Rao, another outstanding Maratha general attacked the Jat territory in December 1766. First he came into clash with a samindar, who was not on friendly terms with Jawahir Singh. But the Jat chief responded to the appeal of his feudatory for assistance at this juncture. Realising that timely help to his erst while foe will serve to save his own position, Jawahir advanced with a large army and encamped on the bank of the Chambal river. But, before the actual contest could take place, Abdalis invasion on Hindustan was reported. The Marathas immediately concluded peace with Jawahir Singh, who agreed to

1. Malhar Rao Holkar after recovering Jhansi in 1765, turned to attack Rana of Gohad, a Jat Prince in Jan. 1766, independent of Bharatpur and was supported by Jawahir Singh against the Marathas. Malhar seized the opportunity of interfering in the internal affair of the Jats, sent a detachment of 15000, horse under Sultanji Lambhate, Makaji Lambhate and Santaji Bable across Chambal. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 337.

2. Zikr, p. 113.

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set the Maratha soldiers free who had been captured in the war with Malhar Rao. The settlement having been arrived at, the Marathas withdrew from the scene and went away. Jawahir punished the traitors, who had supported the Marathas and then returned to Akbarabad,¹ where Raja Nagarmal came out to meet him. Mir had accompanied him to Agra, and found another opportunity, for the second time to visit the graves of his ancestors. He stayed there for about fifteen days.

Abdalis Invasion 1767:

This invasion of Abdali was shortlived, he could not advance beyond Butlej and had to return quickly when the Sikhs encircled and harassed his army fearlessly.²

The Jat-Raiput Contest:

Mir describing the battle between Jawahir Singh and Madho Singh says that their relations had bitterly deteriorated

1. Zikr, p.115.

In December 1766, when Raghunath came upto ^hCambal to oppose Jawahir Singh, some of Jawahir's chieftains, Mohant and Umrao Gir Gosain joined him in his mission. Thus after the conclusion of peace, Jawahir set out to punish his Gosain Chiefs, attacked the Gosain camp on 23 Dec. and about six hundred men were slain. Chahar-Gulzar-i-Shuja'i(Ms)473b-474a.

2. Zikr, p. 116.

The actual cause of Abdali's return was that from 1765 to 1766 Ahmad Shah Durrani had been busy in setting the administration of his own country and thus was not able to pay much attention to the affairs at Punjab, which gave a free hand to Sikhs, who by 1767 had set up their own ruler in Lahore. Khazana-i Amira, p. 114. Ahmad Shah Durrani, p. 313.

on the issue of a zamindar and gradually the dispute became so complicated that the contenders put it to the arbitrament of the sword.

Jawahir Singh, under the pretext of a pilgrimage,¹ reached a sacred lake, and met Bijai Singh, son of Bakht Singh on 6 December 1767. The Jat army on the way had looted and molested people. But the combat was averted for the time being by the successful intervention of the Rajput Prince Bijai Singh, about whom Mir says that though a youth, ² ~~has~~ he was adept in the art of state craft.

Rai Bahadur Singh, the eldest son of Raja Jawahir Singh went with him for a holy dip into the lake of Pushkar, while they were on their return journey the Rajputs, in violation of the peace terms attacked the Jats,³ but they fought gallantly, the whole day, and by evening the combatants being exhausted withdrew from the battlefield.

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1. Bijai Singh was the Rajput prince of Marwar. Jawahir Singh tried to befriend him against his fellow prince Madho Singh. Siyar-ul Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p.
 2. Zikr, p. 116.
 3. Ibid. The Jat Raja had almost reached his country, when at Maonda, 23 miles south-west of Narnol, the last Jaipur station, near the Jat frontier, the Rajput army which was close on his heels attacked him on 14 December 1767. For details of Battle of Maonda, See Chahar Gulzar-i Shujai, (MS), p. 495a.

As soon as Jawahir Singh arrived at his fort, the Rajputs followed him with a renewed vigour. Jawahir Singh hired about 10000 Sikhs, encamped on the bank of river Jun and an encounter took place on 29 February 1768 outside Kama. But owing to the defection of Sikhs, who joined the ranks of the Rajputs, Jawahir Singh suffered defeat with heavy losses. However to his good luck, Madho Singh died and the news of his death unnerved the Rajput sardars who concluded peace with the adversary and went back to Jaipur.¹ The Sikhs followed them on the same track. But Jawahir Singh did not live long to enjoy the peace stemming from this settlement; he was assassinated in August 1768 by some one.²

1. Zikr, p. 117.

2. Imad-us Saadat, p. 56, Qanungo, History of Jats, pp. 213-218. Memoirs of Rene Medec (tr.) J.N. Sarkar Bengal Past and Present (1973), p. 50. According to Rene Medec who was in the Jat service then, "Jawahar Singh went to a beautiful garden, which he had made outside the city, for causing his elephants to fight. Jawahir Singh was assassinated by a man whom nobody has yet been able to identify, and who cut his head off with one stroke of his sword. The men of the Rajah immediately fell upon the assassin and ~~disfigured him~~ hacked him to pieces and disfigured him so much that no one could know who the man was."

Decline of Jat Power:

After the death of Jawahir Singh the Jat power declined rapidly. Mir has attributed this decline to internal conflicts and tensions in the ruling dynasty which caused external aggression. It was in the words of Mir 'the enemy from within, and not from without that added to the misfortunes of the Jats.'

Immediately after the death of Jawahir Singh in August 1768, his throne passed to his younger brother Rao Ratan Singh. This young man was given to a life of ease and pleasure, always duped and soaked in wine. According to Mir during his short reign of ten months he maltreated almost everybody in the government. As a result one day a person¹ murdered him on 9 April 1769.

1. Zikr, p. 118.

Mir has not mentioned the name of the murderer. But according to other sources, he was murdered by a Brahman monk Gosain Rupanand. It is said that after succeeding his deceased brother to the throne, Rao Ratan Singh, made a pilgrimage to Vrindavan and there he held the most costly entertainments on the bank of Jamuna. He picked up a Brahman Monk Gosain Rupanand, reputed to be a master of alchemy and engaged him to procure the philosopher's stone. The Brahman extorted a large sum from the raja and afterwards having no way out to save his skin, murdered Ratan Singh during an experiment for transmutation of metals in privacy of his tent.
Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 929.

Now Ratan Singh's infant son Kesari Singh (Mir has spelt it as Kheri Singh) was installed as the new ruler¹ under the regency of a Jat general.

In the meantime, the chief officers of the state installed Nawal Singh, the fourth son of Raja Suraj Mal as the new regent of the infant ruler Kesari Singh. Mir has pointed out here that if the new regent paid attention to the administration, which was in a bad shape, there were chances of its improvement, otherwise it was already tottering.²

A fratricidal war broke out between Nawal Singh and his brother Ranjit Singh, whose appanage was Kumbher. The battle continued for about fifteen days. As the Kumbher fort was strong, Nawal Singh failed to capture it and consequently concluded peace with his brother. But even after this peace, the relation between the two remained estranged.³ This estrangement resulted in another disastrous battle.

1. Zikr, p. 118.

The Jat general was Dan Shah, the brother-in-law of Nawal Singh, the brother of late Raja Ratan Singh.

2. Ibid., p. 118, Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 929.

3. Ibid., p. 118, Qanungo, History of Jat, p. 217.

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Battle Of Sonkh - Aring, 6 April 1770:

Mir has recorded that Jiya Ram a leading general of Ranjit Singh's army, acted as his envoy to the Marathas, who induced the Marathas to help them in their defence against Nawal Singh. The Marathas accepted the offer and marched to Kumbher on March 1770.

In Mir's opinion this terrible battle could have been avoided but for the folly of Nawal Singh. The Marathas had already started moving towards Mathura. But on the night of 6 April 1770, the Jat army moved out to Govardhan a few miles east of Dig and the Jats galloped upon the Marathas and were met with a terrible fire of rockets and light artillery. The Jats fought without any plan and mutual concert. The victory of the Marathas was a foregone conclusion. The Jats fled, but Mir says that though the Marathas were victorious, yet they were not able to capture the strong Fort of Dig.

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1. Zikr, p. 119. Mir has not specified the name of the battle, neither has he given any dates for it.
 2. Ibid... Mir has not given the reason for the sudden change of mind of the Marathas. Thus the description of the battle given by Mir gives an incomplete picture and needs to be supplemented with the reason for the move of the Marathas towards Mathura leaving Kumbher and Dig. There were two reasons firstly, the Marathas had exhausted the supplies in the open country near Dig and Kumbher, secondly by then they had completed their alliance with Najib-ud-daula, who had reached Doab to join them. So they set out for Doab, sending their larger guns and baggage ahead under Tukoji Holkar to Mathura. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, pp. 6-7. Memoirs of Rene Medag (Art.) J.N.Sarkar, Bengal Past and Present, Vol. LF (1936), p. 121.

Zabita Khan's Conflict With the Marathas:

The Marathas after their victory over Nawal Singh, crossed the river Jamuna and encamped at Doab. Najib-ud-daula being a far-sighted statesman knew that these Marathas would not go back without laying waste to the city. He marched with his son Zabita Khan and ^{his} brother. As long as he was alive he, by his shrewdness and statesmanship, was successful in baffling Marathas in Doab. But soon after the settlement he died on 31 October 1770, while on his way home.

Mir's Sojourn In Kama 1770:

At this juncture Mir has quoted an incident which though not of much historical importance, yet serves to show the state of the capital, Delhi, at that time, due to the continuous wars between the Jats, Marathas and Rajputs and civil strife among the Jats.

When the atrocities inflicted by the Jats became intolerable for the citizens of Delhi, Raja Nagar decided to migrate along with nearly one thousand families to Kama,

1. Zikr, p. 121. Najib being a shrewd statesman, saw the gravity of the situation. Since the Sikhs had become quite active in Doab, those days, Najib thought it wise to come to terms with Marathas. Syed Nuruddin Hussain Khan, Sarguzasht Nawab Najib-ud-daula, p. 71.

Regarding the distribution of the spoils he has recorded that the Marathas seized all the treasuries of Zabita Khan and offered only a worthless fraction of it to the emperor. The emperor received nothing except two hundred dying horses and a few tattered and torn tents. But the Emperor could not question his allies for being unjust in the distribution of spoils as he was a destitute, having no men and money. The courtiers exploited the situation to instigate the emperor to distribute the jagirs of the vanquished among his close adherents.¹

Mir has related the story of his misfortune, as a result of this campaign of Marathas. Rai Bahadur Singh was himself reduced to such straits, that he could not provide any thing for his dependents. Thus Mir took leave of him and went from door to door, to every noble's house in the Imperial camp. Since he was a well-known poet, he was able to get some

1. Zikr, p. 122. According to other records, it seems that there was nothing left in Sukkartal for immediately after the escape of Zabita Khan, the Gujars and Mewatis living in the environs of Sukkartal plundered that masterless tract. When the victors arrived at that fort they found only sacked and blazing houses, a few pieces of artillery, too heavy to be removed by the Marathas. Mir has confused the spoils of Sukkartal with the spoils taken from Pathargarh, which resulted in a quarrel between the emperor and the Marathas. Pathargarh was the stone fort built by Najib-ud-daula one mile east of his capital Najibabad. The siege of Pathargarh took place immediately after the victory at Sukkartal. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 38.

an important town in the Jat kingdom. But the Jat officers did not allow them to enter their lands; on the contrary they intended to plunder and molest the immigrants. But the Jat Raja provided them shelter and treated them kindly. At this time he behaved like a ruler and the head of the state i.e. He, with his two sons came out of the fort and worked to help and save the helpless citizens and within two or three days, Raja Nagar Mal with his huge caravan entered Kama, a town situated on the boundary of Jaipur state which was ruled by Raja Prithvi Singh, son of Raja Madho Singh, that time. Mir says that since he was in Raja Nagarmal's employment, he too settled there but was not certain how long he would be staying there in that state of flux.¹

The Marathas Attack on Zabita Khan February 1772:

The Marathas under Sindhia, escorted the emperor Shah Alam to his capital Delhi and then planned to launch a campaign against Zabita Khan under the command of the Emperor. According to Mir the emperor trembled with fear at the thought of fighting in the battle and asked his allies to excuse him on the grounds of his indisposition but Malhar Rao prevailed

1. Zikr, p. 120.

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on him to lead the expedition.

Escape of Zabita Khan and Capture of Sukkartal 1772:

Mir describing this joint expedition of Maratha and the Imperialists says that they forced Zabita Khan to abandon his stronghold without fighting a battle with him. Mir was an eye witness in this campaign. He had accompanied his patron Rai Bahadur Singh, in the Imperial camp.

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1. Zikr, p. 121. The Emperor from the beginning had no ill feeling towards Zabita Khan, which is evident from the fact that when the news of Najib-ud-daula's death reached Shah Alam on 31 October 1770, he first sent to Zabita Khan, the eldest son of Najib-ud-daula, not only the usual condolences but also an investiture for succession to his father's high office of Mir-bakhshi with the title of Amir-ul Umara and asked him to come and escort the emperor to the capital. Secondly, he asked him to pay, the customary fee of succession to his father's office and estates. But Zabita's arrogant behaviour aggravated the emperor but he was helpless. Thereafter a rapid shifting of scenes took place on the political landscape. The Marathas under Sindhia wrested the fort of Delhi from Zabita, and concluded a treaty with the emperor promising to escort him to Delhi. Though with the help of Marathas Shah Alam was able to exact tribute from the Rohilla, yet he tried to leave the matters here and invited Zabita, once again to pay homage and customary presents on the next coronation but Zabita's continual obstinacy in these matters aggravated him and he decided to punish the Rohilla. Siyar-ul Mutaakhkherin, Vol. III, p. 933.
 2. Ibid., p. 122. By this statement, Mir probably means that Zabita Khan, did not fight, for his position was utterly untenable. The Afghan resistance had been shattered in one blow. Every ford held by Zabita's men was abandoned. He begged armed aid from his brother-in-law Faizullah Khan, who had never seen a battle and declined the proposal. Thus Zabita had no alternative but to give way, thus he abandoned Sukkartal in 1772. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 37.
 3. Ibid.

subsistence from them. Finally he came across Wajih-ud-din¹ Khan, brother of Hussam-ud-daula, who gave him relief for a time and honoured him as a man of letters should be.

Difference Between The Marathas And The Emperor:

Mir has given every detail about the quarrel between the emperor and Marathas. Mir observed that Pathargarh expedition of 1772, against the Rohillas had ended in a rupture between the Marathas and the Emperor.² So, the emperor returned to Delhi in disgust, without the Marathas.³ Mirza Najaf Khan, who had risen to the highest position at the court, persuaded the emperor to invade the Jat territory stretching south of Delhi, which he did in September 1772, and took a number of small mud forts. This plan was executed without consulting Hussam-ud-din, who was on friendly terms with the Marathas.⁴

1. Zikr, p. 122 Infra, p. 199.

2. Supra, p. 130.

3. ^{Infra}
Supra, p. 221.

4. The rise of Najaf Khan excited the jealousy of Hussam-uddin who plotted with Tokoji Holkar and Visaji to get Zabita Khan pardoned by the emperor and appointed as Mir-bakshi under Maratha patronage and thus set him as a counter poise to Najaf Khan in official headship of the army of the Emperor, Shah Alam rejected this demand and his refusal precipitated a Maratha attack on Delhi. K.R. Quanungo, Mirza Najaf's First Campaign Against the Jats (as described in a Ms. of Khair-uddin Allahabadi (Ibratnama), I.H.R.C., Vol.V (1923), p.99.

The Marathas conspired to involve the helpless Emperor into an armed clash, and by demonstrating their military might reduce him to a puppet and control him to subserve their own interests. Before undertaking the offensive against the emperor, the Marathas won over Zabita Khan to their side, by promising to restore him to his office and his Jagirs in Saharanpur, which once belonged to him but had been confiscated by the emperor, after the seige of Pathargarh in April 1772. The Marathas sought the support of the Jats by the same tactics.

Marathas Attack On Delhi November 1772:

The Marathas with their allies advanced to Faridabad within a week, and then fording the Jamuna, arrived within eight miles of the capital on 21 November 1772. On the imperial side were Rene Medee, the French General, who had left the service of the Jats and joined the Emperor in 1772.¹ and Najaf Khan, a bold and experienced general.

1. Zikr, p. 123. The French captain deserted the Jats on being seduced by the Emperor. He was promised Rs.400,000 per month, with power to add to his contingent of 3,000 men upto any number he might consider necessary; and a patent for the title of Nawab Samsam-ud-daula Qaim Jang, Six hazari (both zat and sawar) was sent to him. J.N. Sarkar, Memoirs of Rene Medee (Article) Bengal Past and Present, Vol. LI (1938) p. 2.

On 7 December 1772, the two sides met a few miles away from the Purana Qila, but a little skirmishing took place for two three days. After these skirmishes the decisive battle took place on 17 December 1772.

Battle of Purana Qila 17 December 1772:

A pitched battle was fought on 12 December 1772. The Mughalia cavalry was shaken even before being assailed, it broke down at the first charge and fled away. The ignorance and mismanagement of the Imperialists proved fatal for them. Hussam-ud-din, the royal favourite and a rival of Najaf Khan did not advance even one step either to reinforce Najaf Khan or to help Rene Medec. He fled towards the city and took refuge in Ghaziuddin Khan's mansion. The old city of Delhi¹ was plundered thoroughly by Marathas.

The Delhi fort was saved, according to Mir, by the Imperial bodyguard from Maratha assault. He says that the art of warfare and the gallantry of the Imperialists were revealed on the very day when the news of the Maratha

1. Zikr, p. 125. According to Rene Medec the minister Hissam-ud-daulah was a spectator of this pillage. He did not make any move to oppose it, on the contrary, his soldiers pillaged a part of it. Memoire of Rene Medec (Art.) J.N. Sarkar, Bengal Past and Present (1938), p.4.

attack was received. There was a panic among the people. When the artillery wing of the Imperial army, controlled by the European generals, required various kinds of munitions for the battle like Rahkela, cannons, bow-arrows, gun-powder, etc. the mutassadis granted only hundred rupees, to the Mir-Atish for the purchase of so many weapons. Mir-Atish was even more cool. He was such a coward that during the whole battle, he never took an active part. At last Hussam-ud-daula went to the Marathas and opened peace parleys on 19 December 1772. On 2 January 1773 Marathas' triumph was completed.

Expulsion of Mughalias from the city
And Union with Marathas:

Hussam invited the Marathas to the city, in order to expel Najaf Khan and his Mughalia supporters on 17 January 1773. Mir describing this event says that to put up a show Hussam mounted the Imperial artillery on the Lahori gate but in fact he had bribed the Marathas to expel his opponent
¹
Najaf Khan.

But Najaf being a shrewd politician saw that he had no friend except the Mughalias, and a victory against the

1. Zikr, p. 125.

Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (p), Vol. III, p. 932.

Marathas was impossible, so he agreed to the Maratha¹ proposal of leaving Delhi and joining them with his battalion. But he did not stay long in the Maratha camp. Mir says that the Marathas, did not bring respect and privileges which he had enjoyed in the Imperial service. Moreover, the Marathas were not going to stay long in the city as rumours were already afloat that they would take the Mughlalias upto² Akbarabad (Agra) and allow them to disperse from there. But the Marathas under Sindhia proceeded to Jaipur, whereas other leaders went to Jhansi via Farrukhabad to settle the³ dispute with Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh.

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1. Zikr, p. 126. The contingent was to receive a pay of Rs. 3,000 a day, as the Marathas servant in their forthcoming invasion of Rohilkhand and Shuja-ud-daula's dominion. Memoire of Rene Medec (tr.) J.N. Sarkar, Bengal Past and Present.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Zikr, p. 125. Mir has just indicated towards the Ramghat expedition of the Marathas, March 1773. After their settlement with Najaf Khan, the Marathas turned their attention towards ~~the~~ Suja-ud-daula. The Marathas in the beginning tried to avoid a war, and to have a peaceful possession of the districts of Kora and Allahabad, by virtue of the imperial rescript granted to them in 1771. But Shuja-ud-daula was not willing to accept this demand. The Marathas were thus forced to embark upon war on 19 March 1773.

For an account of Ramghat Expedition see Ibratnama (Persian), pp. 222-228.

Downfall Of Hussam-ud-din, June 1773:

When the Marathas and Najaf Khan crossed the Ganges in January 1773 Shuja-ud-daula, accompanied by English reached Farrukhabad on 3 March 1773. The Marathas, finding themselves not strong enough to gain an upperhand in fighting over the Anglo-Awadh army applied for peace which Shuja, a farsighted noble agreed. Consequently, recognizing Najaf Khan as the new Regent of the Mughal Empire, he retired to his province of Awadh and the Marathas returned to their own estates.

Najaf Khan's return to Delhi totally upset Hussam-ud-daula who did not come out in the public for a few days. He was then summoned by the emperor to his court and asked to submit an account of the income from the crownlands which he managed as the Imperial Diwan. The Emperor appointed Abdul Ahad Khan, son of Abdul Majid Khan, the Diwan-i Khalisa in place of Raja Nagar Mal. The new Diwan soon gained the confidence of the Emperor and became his close companion since Hussam-ud-din failed to submit the accounts and satisfy Emperor, he was imprisoned and handed over to Fatah Khan Durrani, in return for eight lakhs of rupees from him, which he needed to clear the arrears of the salaries of Imperial troops. Thus it was upto the Mughals to set Hussam free or

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kill him.¹

Mirza Najaf's Invasion of the Jat Country 1773-1776:

According to Mir the Imperial government had turned bankrupt, when Abdul Ahad Khan assumed charge of wizarat and became its' sole executive head. Abdul Ahad exercised an overriding influence in the council of the Emperor and obtained his assent to every proposal and move for the conduct of the imperial affairs. It was under these circumstances that Mirza Najaf Khan resolved to launch an offensive against the Jats. At this time the imperial treasury was empty and the emperor had direct control over Delhi and some other districts. Militarily he was so weak that he could not extend his control over other areas now under the possession of refractory chiefs. In this situation the only way to overcome these difficulties was an attack on Jat Raja known to be the richest vassal in the north, who had extended his dominion upto the tomb of Kwaja Ekhtiar Kaki, only three or four kos

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1. Zikr, p. 129. According to Khair uddin and Munna Lal, Hussam had been thrown into prison but his rival Najaf Khan got him released by pleading with the emperor and took him to his own house where he was coerced to render the account of the money he had received from the khalisa lands. Hussam compounded for the claims against him by paying six lakhs to the Emperor and three to Hajaf, whereas, Mir differs in this matter, for according to him, the emperor handed him over to Fatah Ali Durrani in return for eight lakh of rupees. Ibratnama (Rotograph), p. 229.

from the city. This scheme was put forward by Mirza Najaf Khan, but the emperor rejected it thinking it to be an impossible dream. Mirza Najaf insisted on making it come true on condition that the Emperor would take only one ¹ third of the spoils and grant the remainder to him. The Emperor agreed to this plan and the Jat campaign was set on foot.

Capture of the Fort of Maidangarhi, August 1773:

According to Mir, since it was in the fate of the Jats, they themselves were drawn to the fort of Maidangarhi which was close to the Tomb of Khwaja Bakhtiyar Kaki. The Jats started plundering and laying waste the villages there. Mirza Najaf sent a detachment there, the Jats did not pay heed to them but by evening the fate decided in Mirza Najaf's favour. Najaf's heavy fire drove the rustic garrison from the walls and the fortalice was taken of 17 August 1773. Another detachment of Jats, attacking the garhi of Hasaru, was defeated and despoiled on 5 October 1773. The Nawab's soldiers stayed

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1. Zikr, p. 128. According to Mir such a plan of distribution of the spoils was put forward by the emperor himself.
 2. Ibid., p. 129. This detachment was defeated by Mirza Najaf Quli Khan, a lieutenant of Mirza Najaf Khan, Qanungo, Mirza Najaf Khan's first Campaign Against Jats (Art.) I.H.R.C. Vol. V (1923) p. 101.
 3. Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai (MS), ff. 491b-493b.

that night as the autumn crop was ripe, the Nawab's soldiers fed themselves on the standing millet crop on their route and celebrated their victory.

Seige Of Ballabgarh:

The next target of the imperialists was Ballabgarh, a strong fort of the Jats, against which they soon launched military operations. For a few days a heavy exchange of fire continued. In the end the Jat commandant of the fort submitted¹ on condition that the invaders leaving him in charge of the fort should advance towards other forts and bring them under their control. Mirza Najaf Khan being a far-sighted statesman agreed to the proposal, and leaving Ballabgarh in the possession of the vanquished, marched out in the direction of Hodal, held by Naval Singh. At Hodal too the Jat chief put up a stout defence with the help of his large army. A bloody combat followed in which heavy exchange of fire caused dreadful losses of the life on both sides. However, Najaf's superior generalship won the day

1. Zikr, pp. 129-130. Mir has not mentioned the name of Jat Sardars, but from other sources it appears that they were Ajit Singh and Hira Singh the dispossessed heirs of the founder of that fort, who promised to help Najaf Khan, with their local knowledge if Najaf Khan promised to help them to restore their lost patrimony. K.R. Qanungo, Mirza Najaf's Campaign against the Jats (as described in a MS. of Khairuddin Allahabadi (Ibrat Nama) vide I.H.R.C. Vol V, pp. 99-103.

for the imperialists. The European general Samru, stood against the Mughals for a long time but at last he, too, retired. The successive victories achieved by Najaf Khan over the Jats made him arrogant and powerful. Moreover, his military successes attracted a large number of soldiers to join his army which soon swelled, costing him more money in regard to the payment of their salaries. To meet this rising expenditure, Najaf Khan found recourse in fresh territorial conquests and material spoils in the Jat lands reputed for their wealth. He therefore sent his¹ generals to capture Dig and himself followed them.

The Ruhela War 1773-1774: Contest between Shuja-ud-daula And Hafiz Rahmat Khan:

Mir has given a detailed account of the Ruhela war. According to him Shuja-ud-daula set out to fight against Hafiz Rahmat Khan. There had been an ancestral rivalry² between the rulers of Awadh and the Ruhelas. Hafiz Rahmat

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1. For details, see French Mercenaries in Jat Campaign, ~~from~~ From the manuscript Journal of Comte De Muldave) (tr.) J.N. Sarkar, Bengal Past and Present, 1936, p.121. Mirza Najaf Khan's Jat Campaigns, K.R. Qamungo (as described in a Manuscript of Kahiruddin Allahabadi (Ibratnama) I.H.R.C. Vol. V (1923), pp. 99-103.
 2. Zikr, p. 133. Khazina-i Amirah, pp. 79-85. Though Shuja-ud daula had helped the Ruhelas against the Marathas, but the underlying motive behind such a move was to keep the Marathas away from his territory at the expense of Ruhelas. Chahar-Gulzar-i Shujai (MS). 212a-213b.

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Khan, in order to prevent the English from helping Shuja-ud-daula, wrote to the governor that Shuja was marching against them with a huge contingent. This enraged the English governor, who came out to meet the challenge. But Shuja-ud-daula was successful in convincing the governor of his intentions, who pledged his words in assisting Shuja with the English troops in the complete subjugation of Ruhelkhand. The districts of Kora and Allahabad were given to Shuja-ud-daula and the governor returned back.

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The Battle of Miranpur Katra - 23 April 1774:

Mir describing the battle between Hafiz Rahmat Khan and Shuja-ud-daula had said that when the wazir returned from Benaras, a number of English soldiers had joined his camp and the Ruhelas were scared at the sight of such a huge contingent. So Zabita Khan and some other Ruhela chiefs with about ten to twelve thousand ³ of soldiers, came to nawab wazir

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1. Zikr, pp. 133-134. The districts of Kora and Allahabad were given to Shuja-ud-daula on 18th September 1773 by the treaty of Benaras and from Benaras Shuja-ud-daula returned to Faizabad. Khazana-i Amirah, p. 85.
 2. The name of the place where the battle took place, is not given in Zikr.
 3. According to other sources, ^{There were} about 2000 troops of Zabita Khan. Different sources have given different strength of the allied army. According to Marathan envoy who was present in the field, 1000 to 1,200 white soldiers and 6,000 Purbia infantry. The Ruhela army has also been variously estimated. For details Imad-us-Sa'adat, p. 115. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 937.

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and tried to convince him that they had no intentions of fighting against him. Shuja allowed them to join on his side, evading the advise of his counsellors, who were against this move of Shuja, as they were of the opinion that Zabita and other Ruhela adherents were traitors and so could not be relied upon. But Shuja had a firm confidence in his own strength.

Mir says that Asaf-ud-daula, who at the time of Mir's writing was the nawab, fought valiantly in this battle. A fierce battle of fire-arms ensued. There was a heavy slaughter, and constant¹ galling of fire. Heaps of the dead bodies of Ruhelas could be seen as far as the vision could travel. The entire Ruhela army was in panic and began fleeing in all directions and Hafiz Rahmat in a brave but vain attempt to rally them received a cannon ball in his chest and fell dead. His head rolled like a ball on the ground. It was brought to Shuja's camp and identified by the Ruhelas. The wazir knelt down and bowed his head in prayer to the almighty when he received the news of the

1. Zikr, p. 134. According to Mir the head of Hafiz Rahmat Khan rolled like a ball on the ground in the battle field but according to contemporary records a little later after the victory, the head of Hafiz Rahmat was severed from his body by Sultan Khan, brother of Murtaza Khan Barrech and was brought to Shuja-ud-daula. Imad-us Saadat pp. 115-16. Sivar-ul-Mutakhkherin, (Persian), Vol. III, p. 937.

victory over the principal enemy of his house.¹ All the property of the fleeing Ruhelas was plundered and appropriated by the Mughals. Thus Hafiz Rahmat Khan's treasures and territory now passed into Shujawud-daula's hand.² Zabita Khan, who had come from Agra to join on the side of the wazir now took leave and returned to Agra.

Death Of Shuja-ud-daula - 26 January 1775:

Mir says that Shuja-ud-daula took ill a few days after his victory over Hafiz Rahmat Khan and due to exertion caused by constant journeying through Ruhelkhand and the toil of campaigning in the inclement weather (summer and rainy season) increased the complaint till at last he became incapacitated. The pleasure ~~of~~ and joy of the public on his victorious return was marred by his illness. Despite the³ best efforts of innumerable physicians he could not be cured.

1. Zikr, p. 135.
2. Ibid., Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai (MS), ff. 189a-214b, Tarikh-i Muzaffari (MS) Vol. II, 197a-200a.
3. Zikr, p. 136. Thirty Indian physicians, ~~the most~~ notable among them was Mualij Khan, were employed on one lakh of rupees per month, but their best efforts proved of no avail and the wazir's wound continued degenerating rapidly. A French surgeon Visage was also tried but he too was unsuccessful in his attempt. Imad-us-Sadat, pp. 118-119; Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian), vol. III, p. 939. Chahar-Gulzar-i-Shujae (MS), p. 218a.

When the wazir saw that his end was near, he conferred the wizarat and the charge of his subah to his heir Asaf-ud-ud-daula. He died on 26 January 1776. Mir was moved at the death of Shuja-ud-daula.

Death of Mukhtar-ud-daula - March 1776 A.D.:

According to Mir after a few days of the death of Shuja-ud-daula Mukhtar-ud-daula who was the naib or deputy of the subah was killed by Basant Ali a Khwaja Sara, and the neyabat was conferred on Hasan Raza Khan Sarfaraz-ud-daula.

1. Zikr, p. 136.

Mir has not given the cause of the murder of Mukhtar-ud-daula. The cause as given in other sources is that Basant Ali Khan was an old Khwaja Sara in the time of Shuja-ud-daula, was jealous of the influence of Mukhtar-ud-daula over the Nawab Asaf-ud-daula. So he resolved to remove him. He invited Mukhtar-ud-daula to an entertainment, murdered him and was himself slain the same day by the order of the Nawab, in March 1776. Beale, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 281.

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Seige of the Fort of Dig, November 1775-1776:

In the meantime Nawal Singh the Jat Rajah died on 11 August 1775, and the Jats defended themselves under the leadership of the Raja's younger son Ranjit Singh. According to Mir the Sardar in-charge of the fort of Dig² helped the Mughals in its' capture. The Mughals entered fort and plundered enormous treasures; Every soldier turned rich. Besides, large quantities of arms, munitions and cannon fell into the hands of the victors.

Najaf, leaving the fort of Dig in the hands of the sardar advanced towards Kumbher, another strong fort of the Jats. Here also victory attended the arms of the Mughals, and they acquired an enormous booty. The whole Jat territory was now reduced to subjection and it was

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1. Dig is a large town situated thirty kos south-west of Agra. A masonry faced fort is situated in the city. On the same line with the city on the east of Dig, is another important city named Kumbher and in the same direction is found another city called Bharatpur. All the three cities were the strongholds of the Jats. J. N. Sarkar, (Art.) French Mercenaries in Jat Campaign 1775-1776 (tr. from the Jat MS Journal of Compté de - Madaue) cf. Bengal Past and Present, Vol. LI 1936, p. 120.
 2. Zikr p. 130.
Though Mir has mentioned that a Jat Sardar betrayed the cause by helping the Mughals in capturing the fort of Dig but there is no such evidence in any contemporary records to support this statement.
Memoirs of Rene Medee translated by J. N. Sarkar (Art.) French Mercenaries in Jat Campaign of 1775-1776, Bengal Past and Present Vol. LI (1936), pp. 121-22.
Siyaar-ul- Mutakhkherin (Persian), Vol. III, p. 955.
(Continued on next page....)

only by the intercession of Rani Kishori, mother of the Raja, that the conqueror allowed Ranjit Singh to retain the fort of Bharatpur. This success emboldened Najaf Khan to capture Agra and establish his authority in that important province. There too the same story of seige by the imperialists and defence by the Jats was repeated. The Jat commandant surrendered the Fort on 13 February 1774, on being promised of security to his family and property.¹

(Continued from previous page)

Rene Medee attributes the capitulation of Dig by the Jats to the outbreak of a severe famine in the garrison otherwise, in ordinary circumstances the Jats would have continued their resistance for a longer period. Memoirs of Rene Medee, p. 123.

1. Zikr, p. 130.

Firstly Mir has described the capture of Agra Fort as the last expedition of the Jat campaigns of Najaf whereas, the contemporary records tend to show that the fort was captured on 18 February 1774 and the Dig Fort was finally brought under subjugation on 30 April 1776.

Secondly, while describing the seige and capture of Agra Fort, Mir has not given any details about the valour with which the besieged faced Najaf Khan. Though the contemporary records clearly state that the besieged gave a good account of their valour and courage till the last and surrendered only when they were exhausted and thought it futile to carry on unequal struggle.

For details of capture of Agra Fort Imad-us-Saadat, p. 115, Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian) Vol. III, pp. 938-939.

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By January 1776 Najaf Khan had come to exercise his sway over the major parts of the Jat territory. This overwhelming victory gave confidence to Najaf Khan and from now onwards he tried to dominate the affairs of the empire. The Emperor demanded one third of the revenue of the conquered land, as was agreed upon before the Jat campaign. Najaf Khan did not keep to his promise and evaded the payment on the plea that he had distributed all the spoils of the conquest among his soldiers. But the emperor did not trust his statement and he could not deceive. Abdul Ahad Khan and his fraud failed to satisfy the emperor or his wary counsellor. Thus, at last he was forced to keep to his commitment. He was appointed the mir-bakshi and Amir-ul Umara and a few days after he took leave of Emperor and retired to Agra.

1. Zikr, pp. 131-132.

Mir has recorded that Najaf Khan was appointed Mir-bakshi after his Jat campaign, whereas according to contemporary records while Mirza Najaf was busy in the Jat campaigns his rivals in the court were busy plotting his overthrow. But their plans proved futile and proved a boon in disguise for Mirza Najaf. For it left the emperor even more dependent upon Mirza Najaf than before and it was in May 1777 that the office of Mir-bakshi was taken away from Zabita Khan and conferred on Mirza Najaf with the title of Amir-ul-Umara. Siya-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 955, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 93; Imad-us-Saadat, pp. 108-109.

Abdul Ahad Khan's Patiala Campaign, June 1779:

Mir giving an account of Abdul Ahad Khan's unsuccessful expedition to Patiala States that Abdul Ahad bribed some of the Sikh Sardars and won them over to his side and with Prince Farkhunda Akhtar attacked Raja of Patiala in October 1779. In fact his intentions were to woo the Sikhs against his rival Najaf Khan, if ever he found an opportunity. Though he was on his way to Patiala his thoughts were fixed upon annihilating Najaf Khan. Gradually many of Najaf's troopers deserted and joined the ranks of Abdul Ahad Khan. But according to Mir he was utterly incapable of waging a war as he was wanting in personal courage as well as diplomacy. He left everything incomplete. He stood firm for a few days but then at the counsel of his Sikh allies, concluded peace with the Raja of Patiala.

1. Zikr, pp. 131-132, Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin (Persian) Vol. III, p. 956

2. Zikr, pp. 131-132.

For details of Patiala Campaign of Abdul Ahad Khan See Ma'asir-ul-Umara (tr.), Vol. II, p. 1054.

Mir has observed that whatever money was there, was squandered in this unplanned expedition of Abdul Ahad Khan. He asked the emperor for financial assistance. The emperor was very angry at this enterprise of Abdul Ahad Khan, ^{and} ~~he~~ ¹ refused to sanction his demands.

Panic at Court, Mirza Najaf Recalled For Defence of the City, October 1779:

When the news of Abdul Ahad Khan's failure in the Patiala campaign was brought to the emperor on 16 October 1779, the royal court was filled with utter ² consternation and despair. At this juncture the only ray of hope was Mirza Najaf Khan, to whom the Emperor issued frantic orders to return immediately to defend ³ the capital against the anticipated attack of the Sikhs.

1. Zikr, p. 131-132.

2. Ibid., p. 137.

The reasons for consternation and despair at the retreat of Abdul Ahad were many and varied. Firstly, the only army under the emperors control seemed doomed to annihilation. Secondly, the thought of his beloved son, being hemmed round by lakhs of Sikhs worried the Emperor. Thirdly, it was anticipated that the Sikh hordes would now advance towards Delhi and would occupy it as it was left without a single defender. Ibratnama (R) pp. 14-16.

3. Mirza Najaf Khan was at the time busy campaigning in the south, against the Marathas.
Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, pp. 126-127.

The Mirza obeyed the royal summons and set out for Delhi. At the news of the royal invitation of Najaf, Abdul Ahad Khan abandoned everything in his camp and hurried back to Delhi, accompanied by Prince, and reached the court two days before the arrival of his rival Najaf Khan i.e. on 12 November 1779 and assumed the charge of administration.

When the arrival of Mirza Najaf Khan was reported to the emperor, he sent Abdul Ahad Khan to receive him. Accordingly Abdul Ahad Khan advanced on 14 November 1779 to meet the commander, and they both came to the emperor sitting together in the hauda of the elephant.

Mirza Najaf after audience, came out with Abdul Ahad, but in the meantime cautioned his men to

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1. Zikr, p. 137, According to other records Abdul Ahad did not go alone to receive the Mirza but took Prince Akbar Shah on behalf of the emperor. Ibratnama (R) pp. 7-16. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 126.
 2. Mir is not clear about the fact whether Mirza Najaf Khan came to the court seated on the same elephant with the Prince or with Abdul Ahad Khan. According to ~~to~~ other sources he came with the Prince, and occupied like any other servant, the back seat in the hauda.

enter the fort fully armed and completely occupy it. The inner apartments including Diwan-i-Am wa Khwas passed under the control of Mirza Najaf's armed men.

Abdul Ahad's Dismissal and Captivity:

Mir says that when the two nobles were returning together from the royal council, Mirza Najaf had a good opportunity to knock down Abdul Ahad but he did not resort to this extreme step out of regard for the emperor. Since he was also a servant of the emperor, he could not do such a heinous deed without seeking his prior assent for it. But when Najaf Khan next visited the court and suggested that Abdul Ahad Khan should be dismissed and handed over to him, the Emperor declined to expel his faithful officer and expressed his anger on the restraints, Najaf Khan had imposed on him. But Mir's opinion is that all this displeasure and spleen of the emperor had been pretended to conceal the tacit approval of what had been done.¹

As Abdul Ahad Khan's supporters had left him i.e. the Sikhs and his own soldiers, he had no way out

1. Zikr, p. 139.

of this difficult situation. He requested the emperor to see that he was treated kindly. The emperor assured him of his safety and coaxed him to accompany Mirza Najaf. Abdul Ahad submitted completely to the Mirza, went with him to his camp, where he was lodged in all comfort, in a separate tent on 15 November 1779.

Mir has been more explicit about the comforts given to Abdul Ahad Khan, he was provided with some servants to wait upon him and a subsistence of twenty rupees per day was granted. Having thus settled the affairs of his rival, and clearing his field from other opponents Najaf Khan visited the court on 16 November 1779 and became the supreme regent.¹

1. Zikr, p. 138.

He was appointed Wakil-i-Multhaq, and the other high posts so long held by Abdul Ahad Khan were also bestowed on him. II Mir bakshiship was given to Prince Jahandar Shah, the command of artillery (Mir-Atish) to Prince Farkhunda Bakht, and the superintendence of Diwan-i-am and Khaz to Prince Akbar Shah nominally. But Najaf Khan became all powerful in the exercise of actual administration; all parwanahs bore his seal while all sanads bore that of the wazir Shuja, whose deputy he was at the court. Maathir-ul-Umara (tr.) Vol. II, pp. 1047-1048.

Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 130.

Due to the burden of administration Najaf Khan was busy all the time, and daily a crowd of officials gathered at his place, with the result that the nobles could hardly get an opportunity to meet him. Mir says that the emperor depended so much on him that the court was held in full swing i.e. attended by all the courtiers the day Mirza Najaf attended it otherwise the ease loving emperor was found enjoying life with a few of his ¹seycophants.

Death of Najaf Khan, 6 April 1782:

Mir has called Delhi a 'city of wonders' for Mirza Najaf was completely changed at Delhi. In the company of his friends, Najaf Khan attended wine parties, and spent days and nights in attending singing and dancing professional girls. Excess in wine and women quickly sapped Najaf Khan's vitality. He grew weak and a slow secret fever developed into consumption and he ²died of it on 6 April 1782.

1. Zikr, pp. 138-139.

2. Mir was in the court of Asaf-ud-daula, when he heard of Mirza Najaf Khan's death. It appears that he had gone there before 1782.

Zikr, p. 138.

Imad-us-Sadat, p. 109.

Regency of Mirza Muhammad Shafi 1782-1784:

The death of Mirza Najaf precipitated a new crisis in the Mughal court. There was none to take his place and protect the empire from the foreign invasions and internal disturbances. His lieutenants Afrasiyab Khan, Najaf Quli Khan and others,¹ competed with each other in the struggle for succession.

However, Mir omits details in respect of the struggle for power that followed the death of Najaf Khan. He begins his story with the return of Mirza Shafi, from his campaign against the Sikhs in May 1782. He, hearing these developments at the court quickly patched up a truce with the Sikhs and set out for Delhi, and soon after his arrival he declared Abdul Ahad Khan as his paternal uncle, set him free from confinement, secured the office of Diwan-e-Khalisa for him, and himself became² the regent of the Empire.

1. Zikr, p. 140.

2. Ibid. This fact recorded by Mir is quite controversial, for according to other records Muhammad Shafi effected a coup on 10 September 1782, and took Abdul Ahad Khan and Najaf Quli Khan as prisoners, whereas according to Mir Mirza Shafi, set him free and appointed him, the supreme regent and subedar of Agra with the title of Nasir-ud-daula Zulfikar Jang on 15 September 1782, Ibratnama, pp. 43-46.

Emperor's Coup and Expulsion of Mirza Shafi,
16 October 1782:

The increasing strength and arrogance of Mirza Shafi had placed every one in danger. Exasperated by the hostile design of the family members of Najaf Khan, Shafi sent a force to arrest Najaf Quli Khan. In the meantime Afrasiyab Khan came and joined Mirza Shafi. The financial difficulties of Mirza Shafi soon brought about an open rupture between him and the sovereign. His power was short lived.

Only a few days had passed when Latafat Ali Khan, a eunuch and representative of Awadh in the Mughal court along with a relative of the English general Samru started intriguing against him and seduced the emperor also to their side.¹ As soon as Mirza Shafi heard of the plan, he fled with Abdul Ahad Khan. Nothing could be known about Mirza Shafi. Thus the emperor sent orders alerting all the chiefs and nobles of the city and the environs and ordered them to bring Mirza Shafi to their court if he was found in their territory. One such order was received by the chief of Ballabgarh, where the fugitive

1. Zikr, p. 141.
Ibratnama, pp. 47-49.

was residing at that moment. He left Abdul Ahad Khan at Ballabgarh and himself fled towards Akbarabad. Here he gained the adhesion of Muhammad Beg Hamadani against the Imperial troops. He marched towards the capital at the head of an army of twenty thousand. The Emperor with Latafat Ali Khwaja Sara and the European general and other adherents marched and encamped on the banks of Jamuna. They were unaware of the impending doom. The emperor sent Latafat Ali, and the European to meet him but Hamadani made them prisoners and killed the European treacherously. The Emperor defended himself with great courage.

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1. The rebels Muhammad Shafi and Hamadani sent their envoys to the Emperor to offer their protestations of loyalty and seek his pardon and the restoration to their former offices and honours. Shah Alam had entrusted this task to his favourite personal Kallu Khawas entitled Muhammad Yakub Khan, who conceived the cunning design of corrupting Hamadani and using him to destroy Shafi. On behalf of the emperor, he promised the Mir-bakshiship to Hamadani, if he abandoned Shafi. Hamadani fell into the trap. For confirming this pact, it was agreed upon that Latafat should meet and give personal assurances and oaths to Muhammad Beg. This plot proved disastrous for Latafat as he was seized by Hamadani when he went to meet him on 17 November. Chahar-Gulzar-i-Shujai (Rotograph) p. 205. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol.III, p. 171.

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When the rebels realized that the Emperor would not go back without giving them a battle. Mirza Shafi sent Abdul Ahad Khan to offer protestations of loyalty to the Emperor and brought him back from his camp to the fort.

Afrasiyab Khan, Najaf Quli Khan and Abdul Ahad Khan together took the reigns of the government in their hand and tricked away Hamadani, who had aligned himself to Mirza Shafi. Thus he retired to Akbarabad and Afrasiyab Khan also returned to his estate after a few days. Mirza Shafi, fought with Najaf Quli Khan, imprisoned him and sent him to the Begum, sister of Najaf Quli Khan. But the Begum pleaded his case and got Najaf Quli Khan released.

Gradually the power and domination of Mirza Shafi increased. But none of the chiefs relied on him. Afrasiyab Khan intrigued against him with Hamadani. It was decided that Mirza Shafi would go up to Hamadani's camp in order to receive personal assurance of his safety during his visit to imperial camp. Muhammad Shafi was easily deluded and treacherously murdered on 23rd September 1783 by the soldiers of Hamadani. The murder of Muhammad Shafi cleared the way for Afrasiyab Khan

to achieve his ambition of securing the post of Mir-bakshi. After the departure of Hamadani to Agra, ¹ Afrasiyab Khan became new regent in September 1783.

Reception of the Governor-General at the Court of Lucknow, March 1784:

The Nawab Wasir advanced to welcome Warren Hastings, the governor-general, ^{when he} had come to Lucknow on his invitation. During those days the governor had ² complete sway over the Country.

1. Zikr, pp. 142-143.

2. Mir has not referred to the place from where the nawab advanced to welcome the governor, nor to the place from where the governor had arrived. According to other sources, Nawab Asaf-ud-daula moved out from the city and encamped at Jhusi Allahabad. When the news of the Governor-general's arrival at Benaras was received, the nawab despatched his minister Haider Beg Khan accompanied by Almas Ali Khan, Governor of Kora and Etawah, an officer of great ability and influence. They met the Governor-general at Benares and having presented their nazars remained in attendance on him. Later the Governor-General went to Allahabad and Asaf-ud-daula followed him and met him there. From Allahabad they came together to Lucknow.

Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai (Rotograph), p. 161.

Imad-us-Sadat, p. 139.

The Treaty With the English:

The growing influence of the English in the Doab that formed the heart of the Empire, presented a major threat to the security of the Mughal throne. When reports of the advancement of the English towards Agra began to pour in, the nobles were frightened and a terror gripped the imperial court. Abdul Ahad Khan championed the cause of the English and advocated for friendship with them. He secretly aligned himself with the officers of the East India Company who had of late endeavoured to establish contacts with the Mughals court in their bid to exercise sway over the administration.

This alignment of Abdul Ahad with the English, increased Afrasiyab's fear that the English might come to the capital and take the helpless emperor into confidence and kick him away. Thus he decided to take the emperor along with him to Agra and join the Marathas there, who were present at Gohad and thereby effectually check all the Mughal rivals and the English intriguers. Thus Afrasiyab Khan hustled the emperor out of his capital on 26 June 1784, and took him to Agra where he reached on 6 August 1784. On their way captured Abdul

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Ahad Khan.

Prince Jawan Bakht's Escape From Delhi
To The Court Of Awadh, April 1784 :

Mir has recorded this historical flight of the crown Prince Jawan Bakht as -

At the time the English were in the city,
 Prince Jawan Bakht slipped out of Delhi on 14 April 1784²
 and reached Lucknow on 6 May 1784, where he was welcomed
 by the Wazir and the governor. Here they carried on
 negotiations with the Marathas,³ the Prince became their
 pensioner. The Marathas wanted to send back the Prince,
 and the English had given up the plan to establish their
 control over Delhi, and were rather concerned with the

1. Zikr, p. 146.
Maasir-ul-Umara (tr.) Vol. II, p. 1055.
2. The reason for Prince Jawan Bakht's escape from Delhi as given by Khairuddin was that he had become weary of the gilded chains and daily insults inflicted by Abdul Ahad Khan on him and the Emperor. Ibratnama, pp. 70-76.
3. The English carried on negotiations with the Marathas to secure an independent appange for the Prince but they were unsuccessful in their attempt and the Prince had to end his days under confinement at Benaras.
Ibratnama (Rotograph) pp. 70-76.
Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 185.

consolidation of their power at Calcutta.¹

After a few days the governor took leave of the Wazir and with the Prince, proceeded towards Calcutta. While returning the Governor distributed innumerable presents to the subordinates of the Nawab, the cost and beauty of which cannot be dreamt off. Each noble was given a horse, an elephant and conferred the khilat.²

Murder of Afrasiyab Khan, 2 November, 1784:

Mir writes that as soon as the Governor went back and the Wazir reached his capital Lucknow, Afrasiyab Khan in league with the Marathas decided to crush his rival Muhammad Beg Hamadani. Hamadani also stood up to face the challenge. But, before the outcome of the contest between the rivals in the field of battle, the assassin's⁵ dagger decided the fate of Afrasiyab. Zain-ul³ Abidin, the brother of Mirza Shafi, had posted some of his faithful servants in the tent of Afrasiyab Khan and one

1. Zikr, pp. 146-147.

2. Ibid.

3. For details about Muhammad Shafi see Infra, p.218.

of them at a favourable opportunity stabbed him to¹
death on 2 November 1784.

Sindhia Crushes Hamadani, 10 November 1784:

According to Mir there was none in the court,
to fill the post of the dead regent. It seemed probable
that the Marathas might take over the regency of the
Empire. Meanwhile there was a clash between the Marathas²
and Hamadani's troops and Hamadani was taken a prisoner.

The English Governor who had taken Prince
Jawan Bakht to Calcutta, allowed him to return to his
own capital in 1784.

Regency of The Marathas 1784:

Of the four ~~Leutenants~~^{lieutenants} of Najaf Khan who had
staked their claims to the post of regency after the
untimely death of their master, the two — Mirza Shafi
and Afrasiyab Khan — met their tragic ends under

1. Zikr, p. 147, Ibratnama (MS) pp. 88-89.
The assassin is named as Maddu Beg in Poona Jagirdar
Parasnis Collection of Akhbarat, c.f. Fall of the
Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p.191.

2. Zikr, p. 147.

circumstances referred to above; while, of the two surviving claimants, Hamadani was in open revolt, and Najaf Quli Khan had forfeited his claim by excessive indulgence in debauchery at Delhi. Since the Marathas had taken control of the imperial administration, the Emperor conferred the regency on Mahadji Sindhia, the principal Maratha Sardar, which put the domination of Najaf Khan's lieutenants to an end. The Emperor and his new Regent held several conferences in privacy and discussed the complex problems that beset the Empire at this time. The Emperor accepted solutions of several problems as presented by Mahadji Sindhia, and approved his measures for the betterment of the government.

Mahadji Sindhia's Dealing With Sikhs 1785:

The Sikhs who were busy in plundering the environs of the city fled for they were not in a position to fight the Marathas. The Sikhs were, in Mir's opinion, inferior to the Marathas in strategy and tactics of warfare.

The Emperor, at present encamped near Akbarabad, started for Delhi after a few days. Abdul Ahad Khan was

1. Zikr, p. 147.

sent as captive to Aligarh, which was held by Najaf Khan's sister and where a number of Najaf's followers lived.

The Marathas were in absolute control of the Mughal Empire. They had fixed for the emperor some pension and dedicated him in matters of policy as well as conduct of the administration. The Emperor had stayed only for a month in Delhi when the Marathas took him to Aligarh where a severe contest raged against the army of Hamadani, backed by the ladies of Afrasiyab Khan. After fifteen days of vigorous resistance the garrison capitulated the fort of Aligarh, and the Begums surrendered the treasures accumulated there. They were set free and were allowed to take a part of the wealth and private belongings.¹

Mahadji Sindhia's Attack on Rajput 1786:

Mir has described a number of expeditions which Mahadji Sindhia had undertaken against those Rajput chiefs who had failed to pay the tribute to the Mughal

1. Zikr, pp. 148-149.

government. The first expedition was led by Emperor himself on 3rd January 1786. Mahadji tried to realise the tribute from the Rajputs through peaceful means and as a result of his efforts terms for payment of arrears were settled. The Emperor set out for Delhi and the Marathas proceeded to Akbarabad.¹

Second Rajput Campaign 1787:

Mir has not mentioned the name of the place where this second campaign was fought, but from other sources it appears that Lalsot² was the scene of fighting. The Rajput rajas won Hamadani, a Najaf Khani noble, to their side. A fierce battle ensued between Marathas and the Rajputs, in which Hamadani displayed great feats of valour but was killed. Mirza Ismail took over the³ command of his army.

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1. Zikr, p. 149.
 2. Lalsot is a large village thirty miles south-east of the city of Jaipur. The entire northern and western sides of village were enclosed as if held in the tentacles of giant octopus. For details of Lalsot Campaign, Ibratnama (R.) p. 27, Fall of the Mughal Empire Vol. III, pp. 245-268; G.S. Desai, New History of Marathas, pp. 150-156.
 3. The greatest loss to Rajput cause was the death of Hamadani, which broke the spine of their offensive power. For details of the Battle of Tunga, Ibratnama, (R), pp. 27-28.

Sindhia's Contest with Ismail Beg:

Mirza Ismail Beg fought vigorously with the Marathas and inflicted a crushing defeat on them. When they tried to flee towards Agra, Ismail Beg followed them in hot pursuit. He laid seige to the Agra Fort which continued for about nine months and finally captured it in September 1787. The defeated Maratha^s commander, Rayaji, went towards the friendly country of Bharatpur.

Emperor's Campaign Against Najaf Quli Khan: February - March 1788:

Mir, without giving the causes of Emperor's campaign against Najaf Quli Khan, has simply stated that the Emperor marched against Najaf Quli Khan, and after extracting some money from him, returned to the place¹ on 23 March 1788.

Ghulam Qadir's Triumph And Fall :

Ghulam Qadir, the son of Zabita Khan succeeded his father to the subedari of Saharanpur on 21 January 1785.

1. Zikr, p. 150.

Ghulam Qadir's Conquest of Doab - October 1787:

Mir has dealt exhaustively with the events which took place during the period of Ghulam Qadir's supremacy in the imperial court. He says that Ghulam Qadir marched with his Sikh allies towards Doab, took possession of a number of crownlands and places. A quarrel took place between him and the emperor. The quarrel lasted for about a month or more, and at last the Emperor was successful in annihilating his rival. Ghulam Qadir proceeded to Agra. Mirza Ismail was busy in the seige of Agra fort. Ismail Beg made a pact with Ghulam Qadir on 9th April 1787 against the Marathas. After a few days Mahadji Sindhia¹ renewed his offensive north of Chambal.

Sindhias' Contest with Ismail Beg 1787:

The burden of war with the Marathas fell on Ismail Beg. He fought gallantly and came out victorious. The Marathas retreated beyond Chambal towards Gwalior, the capital of their dominion. The Marathas renewed the attack in the environs of Akbarabad for a second time, but this time Mirza Ismail Beg was defeated. He fled towards

1. Zikr, p. 150.

Ghulam Qadir, but found to his utter distress, that his ally Ghulam Qadir was engrossed in his own affairs, and was not ready to help him. Ismail Beg stayed there¹ for a few days and then retired to his own estates.

Ghulam Qadir's Treacherous Activities,
His Vindictiveness towards Royalty:

Relating the treacherous conduct of Ghulam Qadir Mir has said that the nazir of the Emperor had adopted Ghulam Qadir as his son. He summoned him to the court, in order to gain him a position in the court, for he was exasperated by the emperor's preference to the Marathas. On Nazir's invitation Ghulam Qadir came and wrested the² charge of the Royal Palace on 18 January 1788.

Ghulam Qadir Deposes Shah Alam and Crowns
Bidar Bakht, 31 July 1788:

Ghulam Qadir Khan deposed and tortured Shah Alam on 30 July 1788. The whole royal family was dishonoured and put to severe hardships, the details of which would

1. Zikr, p. 150.

2. Ibid., pp. 150-151.

¹
 fill volumes. The tyrant seized enormous treasures and inflicted insults and indignities on the ladies of Harem. He enthroned another Prince Bidar-Bakht - the son of ex-emperor Ahmad Shah on 31 July 1788.²

The deposed monarch was put to torture and was³ blinded in a most inhuman manner on 10 August 1788. After establishing a complete sway in the capital, the brutal Rohilla Chief did not spare even the nazir, who was imprisoned on false charges.

1. All the members of the Royal family were without food or drink for three, four days, as a result many of the children and old ladies died. The female attendants of the palace were then bound and hot oil was poured on their feet, they gave information of two ice vaults from which a box of gold, silver and mounted vessels were taken. For details, Ibratnama Imad-us-Saadat, p. 60, Franklin W, History of the Reign of Shah Alam, pp. 249-254.
2. Zikr, p. 151, Ibratnama vide E & D, History of India as told by its' Historians, Vol. VIII, p. 247, Peshwas Daftar edited by Dr M. Nazim, pp. 19-21, Letter No. 643 dated 31.7.1788.
3. Shah Alam was kept in the hot sun, then by the orders of Ghulam Qadir, he was thrown on the ground and needle was passed into his eyes. He was kept on the ground for a long time and was beaten with sticks. Ibid., Imad-us-Saadat, p. 60, Franklin, History of the Reign of Shah Alam, pp. 133-144. Waqiat-i-Ghulam Qadir Khan. (MS), Vol. II, pp. 18a-18b.

Rupture with Ismail Beg:

When the high handedness of Ghulam Qadir became intolerable there was a rupture between Ghulam Qadir and Ismail Beg on some issue, He was unjust in the distribution of wealth from palace hoards. This infuriated Ismail beg. Thus he left his ally and made a pact with Sindhia¹ and joined Marathas openly to attack the Rohillas who held the city and the fort. Meanwhile a detachment of Marathas, reached the city and some of them entered the fort. After some Skirmishes the Rohilla troops were driven into palace fort. Ghulam Qadir could not maintain himself in the fort for long. Thus, in the darkness of the night, taking all his belongings, booty, his troops, princes, nazir, relatives and others he stole away through the Khizri gate and encamped near Shahdara. The Marathas were infuriated at his boldness and gave him a final blow in November 1788. After a prolonged warfare, which had dragged on for about a month at different quarters, Ali Bahadur² came from Deccan at the head of a contingent

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1. Zikr, p. 151.
History of the Reign of Shah Alam, pp. 249-250.
Waqia-i-Ghulam Qadir Khan (MS) Vol. II, 46b-47a.
 2. Waqia-i-Ghulam Qadir Khan (MS), Vol. II, p. 47a-47b.

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furnished by Peshwa and joined in on Mahadji Sindhia's side at Mathura. On 17 November 1788 he was detached against Ghulam Qadir. After a few skirmishes Ghulam Qadir was captured, his property was confiscated and the captive princes were released. The sightless deposed Emperor Shah Alam II was once again enthroned and the Marathas gave¹ the charge of the fort to Jats.

The Marathas granted a pension of a hundred rupees daily to the emperor. The flag of Marathas once again floated over Delhi in December 1788. The treacherous Ghulam Qadir Khan was put to death after putting him to every possible torture. His whole body was mutilated² before he was put to death on 3 March 1789.

1. Zikr, p. 151.

IN Mir's opinion the Marathas were the actual rulers now and Shah Alam was only a nominal head
Waqia-i-Ghulam Qadir Khan (MS), vol. II, 50b-51a.

2. Ibid., Waqia-i-Ghulam Qadir Khan (MS), Vol. II, p. 50a-50b.

According to Khairuddin Allahabadi, Ghulam Qadir Khan after being defeated by the Marathas fled toward Gauskada, his home, and in the darkness of night he lost his way and reached some brahmans place. The brahman recognised him. He had suffered at the hands of Ghulam Qadir before. So he found a good opportunity to avenge his oppressor. So he informed Ali Bahadur about his presence. Ghulam Qadir was captured at Ali Bahadur's instance and sent to the Fort of Marathas. There by the orders of Sindhia his ears were cut, and face

(continued on next page....)

Thus a complete review of Mir's autobiography brings out the fact that Mir has dealt exhaustively with the political events from 1748-1788 which occurred mainly in North India especially in the Doab region.

Secondly, he had dealt in detail, mostly, with the three powers, i.e. the Jats, Rohillas and Marathas, in the north. The main point which spurts out of the whole narrative is the successions of the Mughal Emperors, skillfully plotted by the powerful nobles, which goes to show, that Mir was aware of the fact that nobles had become all powerful and the struggle for survival of the fittest among the nobles led to the decline of the Mughal Empire, and the gradual rise of a new power the English which was to be our ruler for another two centuries to come.

(Cont... from previous page)

blackened and he was put to various indignities and finally put to death. He has also recorded that the ears and eye-balls of Ghulam Qadir were sent to Emperor Shah Alam by Sindhia. Ibratnama c.f. History of India as told by Its Historians, Vol. VIII, pp. 253-254.

CHAPTER - IV

MIR'S ACCOUNT OF POLITICAL FIGURES

As explained in the previous chapter, Zikr-i-Mir is more concerned with the political history of the period than the life-history of the author or the traits of his personality. It's study provides insight into the character, motivations and psychosis of prominent personalities, who form the main focuss of interest in the book. Mir Taqi Mir was patronized throughout his life by nobles, officials and chiefs, he thus had the opportunity to watch closely their activities and clearly comprehend the nature of relentless conflicts and clashes in which they were involved. But he has purposively avoided richness and plenitude of detail of this struggle in the wider context of the interplay of the divisive forces. Even the treatment of these leaders in the work is most fragmentary and scrappy. His position is understandable. A poet, extremely egoistic and volatile, seeking favours of one noble after another as the compulsions of the situation demanded, could not afford to eulogize one or censure another. Under the conditions of flux, when one patron disappeared from the scene, another perished in his grave, while others lost all wealth and sources of income, the poet stood stunned and dazed, with no friend to look up to, and no course left open to pursue. His thoughts were naturally fixed

on the phenomenon that had caused widespread ruin and created obstacles to survival, rather than on the failures and frailties of individuals. Had he attempted a detailed analysis of every important figure of his day, the work would have turned out to be a voluminous biography of nobles on the model of Ma'asir-ul-Umara, instead of an autobiography distinct in brevity, elegance and sublimity, which so remarkably characterizes Zikr-i Mir.

The nobles and officials, including his patrons, who are alluded to in the work, constitute a long list, a perusal of which undoubtedly proved a homogeneous character of the governing class. The members of this ruling elite belonged to different regions, castes, creeds and sects, and served the government in diverse capacities, but they all extended unstinted patronage to poets and men of letters who approached them and sought it. Khwaja Asim was an Indian Muslim, Ahmad Khan Bangash a Rohila Pathan, while Amir Khan was an Irani noble, Raja Nagar Mal a Hindu peishkar. Some of them were highly educated and cultured, but others were unlettered and unqualified to appreciate poetry and literature, for instance -

1. Khwaja Asim
2. Riayat Khan
3. Mahanarayan Diwan

4. Javed Khan
5. Raja Jugal Kishore
6. Imad-ul-Mulk
7. Raja Nagar Mal
8. Asaf-ud-daula.

Khwaja Asim was the first noble in whose contact Mir came, immediately after his father's death. He fixed a stipend of one rupee per day for Mir which hardly lasted¹ for a year as he was killed in 1739 A.D.

He was a man of smooth, plausible speech, with little knowledge of Persian. In order to conceal his limited acquaintance with Persian, he used to begin by speaking in elegant Urdu, so that he might charm his hearers at the outset and prevent their noticing his defective scholarship. But he could quote with good effect² Persian couplets or proverbs.

1. Zikr, p. 62.

2. Irwine, W., Later Mughals, pp. 264-65.

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Riayat Khan was his next patron whom he accompanied in the first campaign against Abdali in 1748. He, too provided relief to Mir in his hour of distress. Mir parted company with him in 1752 and soon won the patronage of the eunuch, Javed Khan in 1752.

For a time Mir stayed with Javed Khan, who was all powerful in the Empire from 1748 to 1752. From political point of view Mir has judged him harshly, even scathingly.² But as a patron he found Javed Khan generous and he praises him accordingly.³ After his assassination in 1752 Mir came under the wing of Mahanarayan, Diwan of Wazir Safdarjang, and enjoyed his patronage till 1754, when Safdarjang's down fall placed him in difficulties.

When Mir had no regular means of livelihood in 1775 A.D. He was sent for, by Raja Jugal Kishore, one of the wealthiest nobles of Delhi and the wakil of Bengal

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1. Riayat Khan held the rank of 5000/5000 and the title of Zahir-ud-da. For details see Ma'athir-ul-Umara, (tr.) Vol. II, p. 608.
 2. Ralph Russell and Khurshidul Islam, Three Mughal Poets, p. 238.
 3. Zikr, p. 69.

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during the reign of Muhammad Shah. He did Mir the honour of showing him the verses and requesting him to correct them. Mir found most of them beyond correction and scored them through. But this act of Mir did not strain their relationship. Mir's account of the circumstances shows that for nobles it was a matter of honour to make adequate provision for a poet under his patronage² and a painful situation for him when he could not do so.

Mir has been critical about Imad-ul-Mulk's political activities but he had dealings with him as a poet too, and in this field he found him a man of accomplishments and one who knew the duties of a noble towards the men of letters.⁴ And so Mir has remarked: "Despite his age he is still unique figure in the times (1764-65) and has many accomplishments. He writes five or six styles of script admirably and composes verses both in Persian and Urdu. He is very good to me and⁵ ^{it} has always been a great pleasure to visit him."

1. Zikr, p. 75.
2. Three Mughal Poets, p. 239.
3. Ibid.
4. Zikr, p. 113.
5. Ibid.

Mir enjoyed the patronage of Raja Nagar Mal, the Diwan-i-Tan and Khalsa of Muhammad Shah's reign for about fifteen years except for a short break in 1771. He too was a man of literary taste and according to Mir,¹ he patronized the poor and needy and men of letters.

The last of Mir's patron was Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula of Awadh, who was known for his love of art and literature. A horde of men of letters enjoyed his patronage. Mir was one of them.

Asaf-ud-daula himself composed verses in Persian under nom-de-poete of 'Asaf'. He has left a Diwan in Persian.

The study of the biographies of the nobles referred to in Zikr-i Mir, brings to light some of the outstanding characteristics of the nobility of that period. Many of the nobles were characterized by narrowness of aim and pettiness of purpose. They were fond of flattery and their talk was more polite than sincere. They were

1. Zikr, p. 75.

least concerned with the security of the Mughal throne or the^{good} of the general public; their response to the challenges and dangers facing the Empire was generally motivated by considerations of self-aggrandisement and sectarian interests.

Trachery and ingratitude were common traits in nobles' character. Many of those occupying highest positions in the state had their hands soiled with dirty intrigues, for instance, Imad-ul-Mulk, the wazir of Ahmad Shah's time had a hand in imprisonment and blinding of Ahmad Shah.¹ There was generally a case that the people who possessed eloquence, ready wit, were more successful than those who only banked on their ability and bravery, for instance Javed Khan, a eunuch, held the highest post in the government because he enjoyed his master's confidence.

While there was a constant deterioration in the character of nobility which greatly effected the political standards and gradually led to the complete downfall of the Mughals in India, there was a great development in the

1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 339.
Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 894.

fields of social and culture. Most of the nobles were patrons of poets and not only did they give patronage to the artists but were themselves poets and writers.

The poet was nothing but an oracle, guide, orator and spokesman of his community; besides this he was a historian and scientist. In battle his tongue was as effective as his peoples bravery. In peace he was a moulder and agent of public opinion.

A list of the nobles referred to in Zikr-i-Mir is given below.

1. Abhaiy Singh
2. Asad Yar Khan
3. Ahmed Khan Bangash
4. Amir Khan
5. Abdul Ahad Khan
6. Aqibat Khan Kashmiri
7. Asaf-ud-daula
8. Azam Khan
9. Bakht Singh
10. Bishan Singh
11. Bahadur Singh
12. Datta
13. Diwan Khan

14. Ghulam Qadir Khan
15. Ghazi-uddin Khan Ferozejang.
16. Hassan Raza Khan.
17. Hissam uddin Khan
18. Ishwar Singh
19. Ishaq Khan Najm-ud-daula
20. Intizam-ud-daula.
21. Imad-ul-Mulk
22. Javed Khan
23. Jahan Khan
24. Jankoji
25. Jawan Bakht
26. Khwaja Asim
27. Khwaja Basit
28. Khwaja Ghalib
29. Malhar Rao Holkar
30. Muhammad Khan Bangash
31. Mir Najm-ud-din Ali (Salam)
32. Mahanarayan
33. Muhammad Ali Rohilla.
34. Moin-ul-Mulk.
35. Mukhtar-ud-daula.
36. Mirza Muhammad Shafi.
37. Najib-ud-daula.
38. Najabat Khan Rohilla.

39. Najaf Khan
40. Nizam-ul-Mulk
41. Nawal Singh Jat
42. Najaf Quli Khan
43. Qamar-ud-din Khan
44. Qasim Ali Khan or Mir Qasim
45. Qaim Khan
46. Riayat Khan
47. Raja Jain Singh Sawai.
48. Raja Jugal Kishore.
49. Raja Nagar Mal
50. Raja Prithvi Singh
51. Rahmat Ali Khan Rohilla
52. Ranjit Singh
53. Sattar Quli Khan
54. Shahnawaz Khan
55. Safdarjang
56. Saadat Khan
57. Suraj Mal
58. Sjuja_ud-daula.
59. Sadr uddin Khan
60. Saheba
61. Samad Khan
62. Shah Wali Khan
63. Taimur Shah

64. Yakub Ali Khan

65. Zain Khan

66. Zabita Khan.

Mir Taqi Mir, as noted previously, has not given a detailed account of all these nobles in his work. Some of them have been dealt with briefly, while for others, mentioning of mere names was considered sufficient. In this chapter an attempt has been made to fill this gap by writing short sketches of the important nobles and chiefs on the basis of informations drawn from other contemporary sources - political and non-political.

1. Amir Khan

He was an outstanding noble of Muhammad Shah's reign. He held the subedari of Allahabad and mansab of 6000/6000¹. He was a poet of renown, his nom-de-plume was 'Anjam.' He had a remarkable command over the Persian language, its vocabulary and diction. He was witty, cultured and a patron of art and music. In his early life he was a brave soldier, who had played an

1. Zikr, p. 73, For details see Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 1063.

important role in the battles he fought. He had rendered valuable services to the king and served the Mughal government in different capacities. His deep involvement in the court politics led to his tragic murder in 1746 A.D.¹

Mir had lived for a time in his house when he left his maternal uncle Khan Arzu, on account of maltreatment meted out to him by the latter.²

2. Asad Yar Khan:

A native of Agra, Asad Yar Khan was a prominent noble in the court of Muhammad Shah. It was in 1739 that Amir Khan introduced him to the Emperor, who impressed by his personality, conferred on him the mansab of 5000/5000 and the post of darogha of hargaras or head of intelligence department. Soon he was promoted to the rank of 6000/6000³ and honoured with the title of 'Asad-ud-Daulah'.

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1. Zikr, p. 73; Gurdezi in his Tazkirah Rekhta Goyan records that Amir Khan died six years before he wrote. Tazkirah Rekhta Goyan was written in 1166 A.H. i.e. 1753 A.D. Thus, according to it his date of death is approximately 1747 A.D., p. 21.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ma'athir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 1065.

During the reign of Ahmad Shah, Asad Yar Khan¹ held the post of bakshi in Nawab Bahadur's army. Mir has praised him for his benevolent disposition, for it was he, who helped the poet in his days of adversity, by recommending his case to Nawab Bahadur for employment.

He was a gifted poet of Persian and Urdu, with 'insan' as his nom de guerre. His poems, in both the languages, earned for him, a fame and status in the society of those days.² He had a very agreeable and well balanced nature. His courteous nature and his consideration for others made him popular among people. An incident of his life clearly shows that he was a man, who never forgot what others did for him and was never revengeful. It so happened that Amir Khan, his patron turned against him out of envy and got his troops disbanded by influencing the Emperor. Asad Yar Khan, instead of revenging him,

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1. He served as superintendent of Harem servants and manager of the Begam's estate during Muhammad Shah's reign. But during Ahmad Shah's reign he had a complete sway over the entire administration. He held several posts such as superintendent of Privy Council, Head of Intelligence Department. He held the title of Nawab Bahadur. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 17.
 2. Mir Taqi Mir, Nikat-us-Shaura (Teen Tazkirah), p. 22. Qayam Uddin Qaim, Makhzan-e Nikat, p. 23, Gurdezi, Tazkirah Rekhta Goya (Teen Tazkirah), p. 22.

continued grateful for the Khan's early favours; not only this he even sold his goods to discharge the dues of Amir Khan's unpaid and mutinous troops and thus saved¹ his former patron from insult and outrage.

3. Ahmad Khan Bangash:

Ahmad Khan Bangash was the second son of Muhammad Khan Bangash, Nawab of Farrukhabad. He withheld payment of revenue from the five parganahs, which he had² taken on farming lease from his brother Qaim Khan; the money so misappropriated, he spent on the construction of a silver howdah.

Ahmad Khan acted as an ally of Ahmad Shah Abdali, when he invaded India for the sixth time in 1173 A.H. He played an important role in the battle of Panipat, forwarding supplies to the Abdali camp. Shuja-ud-daula, the nawab of Awadh, was also induced to give in his adherence to the Abdalis.

1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 21.

2. W. Irwine; 'The Bangash Nawabs of Awadh'; Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 48 (1879), p. 58.

He did not display much valour, for when the Rohilla war broke out, he slipped off quietly from Delhi, without receiving the emperor's permission. Mir has mentioned Ahmad Khan in the context of the war with wazir¹ Safdarjang in December 1749 A.D./ 1163 A.H.

Ahmad Khan governed his country for about twenty two lunar years and died in November 1771, Shaban A.H. 1185.

4. Raja Abhai Singh:

Abhai Singh, Raja of Jodhpur, succeeded his father Ajit Singh in 1726. In 1727 A.D. he was appointed the Governor of Guj^Arat and served in that capacity for seven² years.

Mir has just mentioned his name in the context of³ of a war between the two brothers.

1. Thomas William Beale; An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, London (1879), p. 58.
2. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 15.
Ma'athir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 707, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 151.
3. Zikr, p. 69.

He was arrogant and had a ferocious courage, which was tempered only by excessive indolence and his love of ease and opium increased with years. In his later year he was intoxicated with pride from his ^{victory over} ~~defeat~~ of Sarbuland Khan 1730 A.D. and accumulation of riches in the subah¹ of Gujarat of which he was the viceroy.

5. Abdul Ahad Khan:

Abdul Ahad Khan was a Kashmiri. His father, Abdul Majid Khan held the post of Diwan-i-Tan and Khalsa and the title of Majid-ud-Daulah during the reign of Muhammad Shah. Abdul Ahad Khan gained the fullest trust of Shah Alam who conducted the affairs of his government on the suggestions and proposals of this noble. He received his father's title and was appointed the deputy wazir (22nd May 1773) at the recommendation of Najaf Khan.²

In the opinion of J.N. Sarkar, Abdul Ahad Khan's natural weapons of duplicity and covert intrigue did not help him, long. His intrigues failed when he was called

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1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 151. Tod, James, Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Vol. II, p. 87.
 2. Zikr, p. 128, Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 1055.
 3. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 63.

upon to solve complex problems which the government
¹ faced. His nearest rival was his own mentor Najaf Khan.
 Abdul Ahad's unsuccessful Patiala campaign (1779 A.D.)²
 vividly illustrate his utter incapacity for war and
 management of men alike. In 1784 A.D. after the battle
 with Marathas, he was the only great noble, who survived
 but was a captive at Aligarh fort. Being a favourite of
 the emperor, he was summoned to meet the emperor but the
 meeting did not materialize. Before he could reach the
 emperor, the giladar of Agra once again put him in confine-
 ment without the emperor's order.

6. Aqibat Mahmud Khan Kashmiri:

Mir, in his work, has mentioned the name of this
 noble only once and that too, in the context of his
 assassination ~~in~~ without giving any information about the
 circumstances in which his tragic end came.³ We know from
 other sources that Aqibat Mahmud Khan Kashmiri was the
 principal courtier of Ahmad Shah and that he exercised

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1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, op.cit., p. 64.
 2. For details of Patiala Campaign, ibid., p. 125, also Zikr, p. 132.
 3. Zikr, p. 80.

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authority over all the other courtiers and officers unchecked by the Emperor. In the power politics he was the bitter enemy of Intizam-ud-Daulah, the wazir, and manipulated to weaken his power by organizing a party of his own. He promised the officers and soldiers of the artillery (fire-arms) rewards and honours by the Emperor if they joined his contingent to liquidate the power of Intizam-ud-Daulah.¹

7. Asaf-ud-daula:

Asaf-ud-daula, the eldest son of Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh, succeeded his father in 1775 A.D. Asaf-ud-daula's character differed greatly, in almost every respect from that of his father. While his father and grand-father were brave and courageous, and always displayed keen interest in aggression and military exploits and conquests, Nawab Asaf-ud-daula, on the contrary, took delight in satisfying his sensual desires and the only ambition of his life was to live a luxurious and comfortable life, free from the cares of government and risks of war. The

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1. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 425.
 2. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 81.
Tarikh-i Awadh, Vol. 3, p. 7.
 3. Abbas Ali, Illustrated Historical Album of Rajas and Taluqadars of Oudh, p. 9.

money which Shuja_ud-daula had accumulated, he spent it on the splendour of his court, construction of buildings and gardens, and making Lucknow a magnificent city to rival Delhi.

Nawab Asaf-ud-daula was renowned for his generosity and benevolence. His bounty was unbounded and his fame as the most generous ruler of the day spread far and wide, tempting thousands of people to obtain worldly gains by seeking his patronage. He was praised by everyone for his munificence, and the people did not feel concerned with the declining standards in the government and army. His inefficiency, indifference towards public affairs and his squandering of state treasures, his faults and failings were all glossed over by his acts of generosity. In the opinion of public, he appeared not as a dissolute ruler but as a selfless and self-sacrificing guardian of common man. A common phrase used for him in those days was -

جس کو نہ دے مولا
اس کو دے آصف الدولہ

He was a man of literary taste and in his court gathered hundreds of scholars, artists, poets and literate from all the corners of northern India. They were given

handome allowances of subsistence and special honours and favours were showered on them. A large number of poets and scholars, who had migrated from Delhi found safe refuge in his court. Mir also came to Lucknow on a special invitation from him and met Asaf-ud-daula for the first time, when he was going to witness a game of cock-fighting.¹ Mir was handsomely pensioned.

Mir has written many masnavis on such games, which had developed in the eighteenth century and had gained much popularity, specially in Awadh. For instance, a masnavi on cock-fighting -

گر پر خاش مرغ یہاں پائے	دلی سے ہم جو لکھنؤ آئے
مرغ آہو میر کا بھی حیراں ہے	پر و پر زار دست یکساں ہے
تاز و سارس سے جنگ جس کا رنگ	مرغ ہے ایک ایک جیسے ملنگ
ڈلر کیا لڑ گس شتر دل کا	حوصلہ سقد حواصل کا

Asaf-ud-daula composed verses under the nom de-poete of 'Asaf', he has left a Diwan or a collection of

1. Zikr, p. 139.

2. Kulliyat-i-Mir, pp. 707-710.

his poems. He died in 1797 A.D. and was succeeded by his brother Nawab Sa'adat Ali Khan.

8. Bakht Singh:

Raja Bakht Singh Rathor, son of Ajit Singh and brother of Abhaiy Singh, was the ruler of Jodhpur.¹ Mir has referred to him in the context of a battle with his brother Abhaiy Singh, fought to settle the issue of succession to the throne of Jodhpur.²

Raja Bakht Singh during the short span of his reign strengthened and embellished the stronghold of Marwar.³ He raised a huge army to keep the Marathas out of his realm. He completed the fortifications of the capital and greatly added to the palace of Jodhpur.⁴

1. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 101; Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 883
2. Ibid., p. 311, Zikr, p. 69. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 320.
3. From 1751 to 1753. Ibid., p. 69
4. Ibid., Tod, Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, p. 90.

The intrepidity and liberality alike unbounded, made him the very model of a Rajput. He was a man of literary taste possessing poetic talent of no mean order.¹ He died of cholera in 1753 A.D. though the popular belief in Rajputana was that he had been done to death by his niece, the Rathor queen of Madho Singh by means of poisoned robe.²

9. Bishan Singh:

His ancestors held the zamindari of Allahabad. He was the son of Gopal Singh Gaur. At his own wish the fort and hereditary jagir were assigned to his second son Ajai Chand.³

10. Bahadur Singh :

He was the son of SafdarJang's treasurer Lala Radha Kishan and was with Raja Nagar Mal at the time when Mir met him. Mir was indebted to him for the kind help afforded to him in his days of hardship.⁴

1. Ibid.

2. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 320. For details see Kaviraj Shyamaldas, Vir Vinod.

3. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, tr. by E. Beveridge, pp.593-94.

4. Zikr, p. 91.

He was a petty Raja of Doab of Gujar tribe of Rajputs and ruler of Ghasera and Koel, nominally dependent on Delhi. The wasir Safdarjang in one of his contests had been deserted by Rao Bahadur Singh, whose punishment was entrusted by the Emperor to Suraj Mal Jat, with the grant of all the lands and castles, he might wrest from his opponent. He performed the duty triumphantly. Bahadur Singh was killed in a seige of Ghasera, which with Koel, acknowledged the sovereignty of Jat Prince. These events occurred in 1753 A.D., and form an episode in 'Sujan¹
Charitra', a heroic poem.

11. Dattaji Sindhia :²

Dattaji Sindhia was the son of Ranaji and brother of Jaiapa Sindhia. He was a Maratha chief, who commanded a cavalry of 80,000 horses. He was a rough impatient and hustling soldier, in perfect contrast to his predecessor Malhar Holkar, who was a far-sighted and practical politician.³ From 1759 A.D. to 1760 A.D. Dattaji Sindhia continuously waged war in Northern India to suppress the local

1. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 331.

2. He was the guardian of Jankoji Sindhia, Zikr, p.90.

3. Fall of The Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 139.

chiefs and plunder them. But before he could succeed in his mission he was slain in the Battle of Tarari Ghat¹ in 1760 A.D. by the Afghan soldiers.

12. Ghulam Qadir Khan :

Ghulam Qadir Khan was the son of Zabita Khan and grandson of Najib-ud-daula, the great Rohilla chief. The Wazir of the Emperor adopted him as his son. Ghulam Qadir succeeded his father to the zamindari of Sharanpur. He is that traitor who after extorting as much money as he could from his royal master, the Emperor Shah Alam of Delhi, ordered the Rohillas to pluck out his eyes from the sockets² and placed Bidar Bakht, son of Ahmad Shah, grandson of Muhammad Shah on the throne (1788 August).

After this ghastly act he tried to retreat to his own territory but was persued by the Marathas, who made him a captive, cut off his nose, ears, arms and legs and in this mutilated state he was sent to Delhi but he died³ on way on December 1788 A.D. He was justly punished for

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1. For details see Nuruddin's Life of Najib-ud-daula tr. by Sarkar in Indian Historical Quarterly, 1933.
 2. Zikr, p. 151, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 309
Sivir-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. , An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 145.
 3. ~~Op.cit.~~ Ibid.

the heinous crimes he had perpetrated within the walls of Red fort. His tomb is in Aul pargana Furrāh, zila Agra.

13. Ghaziuddin Khan Feroze Jang :

Ghaziuddin Khan II, Amir-ul-Umara, also known as Feroz Jang was the eldest son of the celebrated Nizam-ul Mulk Asaf Jah. He was elevated to the rank of Amir-ul-Umara after the death of Khan-i-Dauran and departure of Nadir Shah to Persia in 1739 A.D. ¹ by ~~Emperor~~ Muhammad Shah.

Some years after the death of his father, when his brother Nasir Jang, who had succeeded him died in the Deccan, he proceeded from Delhi to regain his possessions ² in that country, but died on his way ³ at Aurangabad, on 16th October 1752 A.D. His remains were brought to Delhi and buried there.

1. Ghulam Ali Azad, Khazana-e-Amra, p. 49. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 143. Ma'athir-ul Umara, Vol. I, p. 588.

2. According to Mir he died of cholera. Zikr, p. 72, but according to Grant Duff he was poisoned by his step-mother. Ma'asir-ul-Umra, Vol. II, p. 593. Khazana-e-Amra, p. 49.

3. Ibid.

14. Hasan Raza Khan :

Hasan Raza Khan's antecedents are little known except that he was the son of Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, who had perhaps held the post of Darogha-e-Bawarchi-khana¹ (Superintendent of Kitchen) under Shuja-ud-daula. Hasan Raza married the daughter of Ghulam Ali Khan, a courtier of Shuja-ud-daula and became a close friend of Bashir Khan, an influential nobleman. He was introduced to the Nawab, by him, who appointed ^{him as} Darogha-e-Bawarchi-khana. After the Nawab's death he fell into background till he was appointed the chief-minister with the title of Sarfaraz-ud-daulah Intizam-ul-Mulk.²

As a chief-minister Hasan Raza had little to do except accompanying the Nawab on his tours and hunting expeditions. He was respected by Asaf-ud-daula as a brother. He is credited to have improved the tone of the court. He held the chief-ministership till almost the end of Asaf-ud-daula's reign.

1. Ghulam Ali Azad, Imad-us-Sadat, p. 135

2. Zikr, p. 136.

Mir has praised him for his laudable qualities such as, humility, kindness, benevolence and dignified manners. He was humane and broad minded and treated the big and small, noble and ignoble alike. But his generosity was the most striking and primary feature of his character. He distributed patronage lavishly and in providing relief and redress to those who needed, he made no distinction.

Mir has eulogized his liberality which promoted the growth of literature. Numerous poets and writers, attracted by the fame of the noble, flocked to the court and contributed to the advancement of learning and culture. Mir was one of the beneficiaries of Sarfaraz Khan's munificence, and he has extolled his benefactors with strong feelings of gratitude. But the last days of the great nobles' life were clouded with misery and loneliness, which only hastened his end. He breathed his last in 1801 A.D.

15. Hussam Uddin Khan :

Hussam Uddin Khan became the chief adviser of Emperor Shah Alam II by supplanting Najaf Khan. He was

1. Zikr, p. 136.

2. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 60.

a great rival of Najaf Khan. He had a complete sway over the Emperor. ~~When had a complete sway over the Emperor.~~ When Mir, was sent by Raja Nagar Mal, as an ambassador to Mughal court, Hussam intervened and did not allow Mir to have audience with the Emperor. He persuaded the emperor not to give any importance to the envoy of the Awadh court. So Mir, frustrated in his mission, returned to Lucknow to report the whole affair to Raja Nagar Mal.¹

Hussam had also been a rival of Munir-ud-daula during the royal sojourn in Allahabad. He was ruined by his pro-Maratha policy during the attack on Delhi in 1729. The English were alienated by the cession of Kara and Allahabad to Marathas.

In 1773 he was replaced by Abdul Ahad Khan as deputy Wazir and his title was reduced to plain Hussam-Uddin.²

16. Ishwari Singh :

Ishwari Singh was the son of Sawai Raja Jai Singh, the ruler of Jaipur kingdom and the governor of Malwa.

1. Zikr, p. 121

2. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 61.

Ishwari Singh succeeded his father in 1743 A.D.¹ During the first invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali (i.e. 1748 A.D.), he accompanied prince Ahmad Shah. Mir just says that he was a great noble of the times.²

He lacked his father's courage and cleverness. In Sir J.N. Sarkar's opinion, he was a weak minded man liable to sudden capricious changes of opinion under the lead of roughts and fools.³ The success of his troops in many battles is attributed to the devotion of several hereditary officers of his house and not to his ability. His seven years of reign was a story of long struggle with his younger brother Madho Singh and his supporters Rajputs and Marathas. Ishwari Singh committed suicide by taking poison at midnight on 12 December 1750.⁴

17. Ishaq Khan Motamin-ud-daula :

Ishaq Khan was a noble man of high rank and eminent position in the court of Muhammad Shah. His

1. Ma'athir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 736.

2. Zikr, p. 68.

3. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 150.

4. Ibid.

original name was Mirza Ghulam Ali. He was a good poet¹ and used for his poetical name 'Ishaq.'

He held the rank of Khan-i-Saman (Superintendent of Kitchen) during the reign of Muahammad Shah. He died in 1152 A.H./ 1739 A.D. He left three sons. The eldest was Mirza Muhammad, who like his father was an intimate of Muhammad Shah and an object of envy to his contemporaries. He received the title of 'Najm-ud-daula'. After Ishaq khan's death his daughter was married to Shuja-ud-daula, the son of Nawab Safdarjang and the nuptials were² celebrated with uncommon splendour.

18. Intizam-ud-daula :

Intizam-ud-daula was the eldest son of Muhammad Shah's wazir Qamar-uddin Khan. His original name was Nizamuddin Khan and he subsequently got his fathers' title of Itimad-ud-daula. He was appointed as second-bakhshi at the accession of Ahmad Shah 1748 A.D./ 1161 A.H., and was promoted to the post of Wizarat in 1753 A.D., 1165 A.H.;

1. Ma'athir-ul Umara, Vol. I, p. 690.

2. Ibid., An Oriental Autobiographical Dictionary, p. 181.

after the dismissal of Nawab Safdarjang from the office. He held the wizarat for a short period of fifteen months¹ (March 1753 A.D. to May 1754 A.D.). Even in this short tenure of office, he proved utterly incapable for holding such a responsible post.

He was a timid and unenterprising man. He always shrank from fighting preferring comforts of home life to the risks and hazards entailed in campaign.² Imad-ud-Mulk, the new wazir was his nearest relation but bitter rivalry existed between the two. Imad-ul-Mulk got him murdered in 1754 A.D. soon after the assassination of Alamgir II.³

19. Imad-ul-Mulk :

Ghazi-uddin Khan III, was the son of Ghaziuddin Khan Ferozejang, the son of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah.⁴

1. An Oriental Biographical dictionary, p. 179.
2. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 46, Imad-us-Sadat, p. 22, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 445.
3. Zikr, p. 92, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 150; An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 181. A detailed account of the murder of Intizam-ud-daula and Alamgir II has been given by Mir, which agrees with the descriptions given in other contemporary works like Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Imdad-us-Sa'adat and Ma'asir-ul-Umara.
4. Khazana-e-Amra, p. 50, An Oriental Biographical dictionary, p. 143, Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 674.

After his fathers' death in 1752 A.D. at the recommendation of Nawab Safdarjang, appointed Amir-ul-Umara, by Ahmad Shah. But he proved very ungrateful to his master for it was he who imprisoned, blinded his master and Ahmad Shah^{and} assassinated Alamgir II,

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He composed Persian and Rekhta poetry and left Arabic and Turkish Ghazals and a voluminous Persian Diwan and a magnavi in which the miracles of Maulana Fakhruddin are related. His poetical name was 'Nizam'.

The year of Ghaziuddin Khans' death is unknown but according to the biography of the poet Ali Ibrahim Khan called Gulzame-Ibrahim², he was living in 1780 A.D./³ 1194 A.H. in straitened circumstances.

Mir has praised Imad-ul Mulk for his bounteous nature and to prove his point he has said that Imad was⁴ very generous to him every time he (Mir) visited him.

1. According to Mir, he had mastered all the forms of poetry. Zikr, p. 113.
2. A biography of Rekhta poets completed in the reign of Shah Alam.
3. Ghaziuddin Khan, c.f. from An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 143.
4. Zikr., p. 113.

20. Javed Khan :

Javed Khan a eunuch, was the Khwaja Sarai (a domestic) during Muhammad Shah's reign. He, by sheer dint of his ability, had succeeded in establishing a complete¹ sway over the mind of Udham Bai, even before her husband's² death. But Javed's rise during Ahmad Shah's reign was more sudden and rapid. He secured the rank of 6000/6000 and became superintendent of privy council (Diwan-e-Khas) in precedence of the hereditary and powerful nobles. By virtue of this office, permission for audience with the emperor depended entirely on his good will.

Mir's assessment of his character and increasing hold over the state affairs is confirmed by the facts contained in other contemporary works in respect of this

1. Udham Bai, the queen mother of Ahmad Shah was formerly a dancing girl. She remained the same vulgar woman to the end of her life. She used her son's elevation as the lever for asserting her own greatness at court and for grasping at money. Her intimacy with the eunuch Javed Khan lowered the imperial prestige. After her son's accession Udham Bai was successively given the title of 'Bai-ju Sahiba', Nawab Qudsia, Sahiba-uz-zamani, Sahibju Sahiba, Hazrat and Qibla-i-Alam. Anonymous, Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi, p. 16-17, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 210.
2. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 337.

development and by accepting the authenticity of these statements, Sarkar, the modern authority on the history of the period, has reached the same conclusion. This surprise over the unexpected rise of Javed Khan has found expression in a couplet in which he compared the former to a beggar not only to indicate its transient nature but also his own contempt for it.

هر روز اختیار جان پیش دیگر نیست
دولت مگر گداست هر روز بر در نیست

In the above couplet he says that power is perhaps a beggar, that presents itself on one day at one man's door¹ and the next day at a different persons door.

He was promoted to 7000/7000 with the title of Nawab Bahadur and rewarded with the highest insignia of honour, namely, mahi-maratib, standard kettle drum and fringed palkis.

1. Zikr, p. 69.

2. Zikr, p. 68-69, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 337.
Sivār-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 862.

This rapid rise of a petty courtier naturally alienated the nobles of the court. The royal ministers felt insulted when the Emperor asked them to refer their business matters to Javed for final orders. The rift gradually widened and in the course of time Javed snapped all ties of relationship with the old and faithful supporters of the imperial throne. For his defence he organised his own group of adherents by appointing inexperienced and incompetent officers. This resulted in a complete breach between the Emperor and the hereditary nobles of the throne.¹ His greatest opponent was Safdarjang, the wazir who took an opportunity to eliminate him through the instrumentality of the assassin's dagger. He was murdered in cold-blood on 27 August 1752, when he came to the mansion of Safdarjang in response to an invitation for lunch with him.²

According to Mir it was a planned murder and committed very skilfully, but he has not given details relating to the background or circumstances of this tragic event.

1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 340.

2. Ibid., 373.

22. Jankoji Sindhia :

Jankoji Sindhia, son of Jaiapa Sindhia¹ was a distinguished Maratha general who was killed in the battle of Panipat in 1761.

23. Prince Jahan Dar Shah Jawan Bakht:

Jawan Bakht, the eldest son of Emperor Shah Alam, was born in 1749 A.D. He was appointed regent by Ahmad Shah Abdali after the battle of Panipat², 1761. He administered the affairs of the state in the absence of his father, who was away on campaigns in Bihar and later lived at Allahabad.

In 1784 A.D., on account of his deep disgust with the worsening state of affairs at the court, escaped from Delhi and repaired to Lucknow, where the British Governor of Bengal Warren Hastings, had arrived to settle the affairs between Asaf-ud-daula and company.³ He accompanied the governor upto Benaras, where he took up his residence. He died there on 31 May 1788.

1. Jaiapa Sindhia was the successor of Ranoji Sindhia, the founder of Sindhia family 1750 A.D.

2. Zikr, p. 98.

3. Ibid., p. 146; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 184; Ma'athir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 775.

His private appellation was Jawan Bakht (Mirza).
Garcin de Tassy informs us that there is a work by him¹
in India House Library named, 'Bayaz- Inayat Murshidzada'

24. Khwaja Asim Samsam-ud-daula Khan-i-Dauran Bahadur
Mansur Jang :

²
Khwaja Asim was born in 1672-73 at Agra, where
his father had settled. His ancestors had migrated from
Badakhshan. His fathers' name was Khwaja Qasim.

He began his life as a trooper of Prince Azim-us-
shan and accompanied him to Bengal and later joined
Farrikhsiyar in Bengal. He gradually gained such influence
over the Prince, that the other courtiers complained to
Azim-us-Shan.³ Upon the succession of Farrukhsiyar, Khwaja
Asim received the title of 'Ashraf Khan' and the post of
superintendent of Privy audience Chamber.⁴ He held the
post of Mir Atish for sometime. He was later on raised

1. This narrative was translated by Col. Scott and published in the appendix to Mr. Hastings, Review of the State of Bengal of. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary. p. 140.
2. According to Tarikh-i-Muhammadi, the age of Khwaja Asim at the time of his death was 68 years. He died in 1151 A.H. (1738 A.D.) and therefore the date of birth can be fixed to 1083 A.H.
3. Irwine: Later Mughals, p. 264.
4. Ibid., p. 265, Z.U.Malik, A Mughal Statesman of the Eighteenth Century, p. 5.

to the rank of 7000/7000 and was honoured with the title¹ of Samsamud-daulah Khan-i Dauran Bahadur Mansur Jang.

When Muhammad Shah took over the reigns of the Mughal Empire Khwaja Asim received the title of Amir-ul-Umara and the post of Mir-bakshi.

Mir was introduced to him by Khwaja Basit, his nephew. He was highly impressed by Mir and he immediately ordered for a subsistence of one rupee to be paid to Mir every day. But this did not last long as Samsam-ud-daula² was slain in the battle with Nadir Shah in 1739 A.D.

25. Khwaja Basit :

Khwaja Muhammad Basit³ was the son of Khwaja Jafar,⁴ elder brother of Khwaja Asim. It was he, who had introduced Mir to Samsam-ud-daula and it is in this context that his name has been mentioned. But no other details about him have been recorded by Mir.

1. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 776.

2. Ibid.

3. Zikr., p. 62.

4. He was one of the respected hermits and belonged to Naqshbandi sect; Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 775. Irwine, Later Mughals, p. 265.

5. Zikr, p. 62, Ibid.

26. Khwaja Ghalib (Jalib) :

Mir has just referred to Ghalib (Jalib) as a man who had great influence in the court of Raja Nagarmal and he was well acquainted with Mir. Thus, when Mir went to meet Raja Nagar Mal in search of employment, Khwaja Ghalib introduced him and got some stipend fixed for him, which continued for about a year.¹

27. Malhar Rao Holkar :

The Holkar family is of Dhungar or Shepherd tribe. The derivation of the name Holkar or more properly 'Halkar' is perhaps from 'Hal' or 'plough' and 'Kar' a labourer, so that it would mean a 'ploughman'!

Malhar Rao Holkar was an officer in service of second Peshwa Bajji Rao, and was one of the earliest Maratha adventurers in the expeditions to the north. He killed Girdhar Bahadur, Subedar of Malwa in the Battle of Amjhera in 1729 A.D.

Malhar faced the Durrani's in 1760 A.D. just a year before the famous battle of Panipat. But in this

1. Zikr, p. 79.

battle, according to Mir, he had not the courage to stand boldly against the Durrani, so, leaving his own contingent under the command of some other Maratha chief, he fled.¹ He also took a leading part in the battle of Panipat, 1761 AD,² but from there also he had to flee for his safety.³ He died in 1768 A.D.

28. Muhammad Khan Bangash :

Muhammad Khan Bangash was a Ruhela chief of the tribe of Bangash.⁴ He started his career as a Jamatdar. He was introduced into the Royal service by the Saiyyad brothers. He founded the city of Farrukhabad and named it after his patron Farrukhsiyar in 1714.

1. Zikr, p. 79.

2. He fled with about two to three thousand horsemen and the rest of the contingent was destroyed. Ibid., p. 97.

3. Mir estimates the cause of Malhar's death as the shock of the defeat of Marathas by Jats.

چوں ملہار مرد اردارے بود شکست پر شکست خورد
اندره دہم سہ چار منزل رفتہ مرد

4. He belonged to Kazhāi Karlai clan of Bangash country in Eastern Afghanistan. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, pp. 160-163; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 45.

21
62.1.1

The area in his possession varied greatly from time to time but at its greatest extent it included the whole district of Farrukhabad, the western half of Kanpur, nearly the whole of Mañipuri and Etah, two parganahs of Badaun and parts of Shahjahanpur, Aligarh and Etah¹ districts.

In the reign of Muhammad Shah, he was appointed the governor of Malwa in 1730 A.D., and was conferred with the title of 'Ghazanfar Jang', but, being unable to cope with the repeated incursions, he was removed from Malwa and appointed the governor of Allahabad in 1732 AD.²

He was bent upon subduing the Bundelas, but was unsuccessful in his mission.³ This defeat cost him heavily for he was removed from the Subedari on the pretext of his failures in campaigns against them. In the battle with Nadir Shah he was in the rear. He died in 1743 A.D. and⁴ was succeeded by his son Qaim Jang.

1. Ibid.

2. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 163, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 45, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 268.

3. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 162. Later Mughals, pp. 284-305.

4. Ibid.

29. Mir Najm-ud-din Ali 'Salam' :

Mir Najm-ud-din Ali 'Salam', born in Akbarabad,¹ was the son of Mir Sharaf-ud-din Ali 'Payam'. He was the Darogah-e -Diwankhana of Diwan Mahanarayan. Mahanarayan sent him to Mir with some funds of money, when Mir was out of employment, after the death of his patron Nawab Bahadur.

Mir has used a chain of adjectives in praise of Najm-ud-din.

حقیقت، حمیت، لیاقت، شخصیت، آدمیت
عزت عظمیٰ سب کچھ رکھتے ہیں۔

2

He says he was endowed with high qualities of realism, ability, character, humanism, honour and dignity. According to Qayam uddin Qaim his composition was a touch-stone of poetry (شاعری کی کسوٹی تھی³). His 'nom de poete' was 'Salam'. He died in east where he had gone with Nawab⁴ Wazir Safdar Jang.

1. Mir Taqi Mir; Nikat-us-Shaura (Teen Tezkireh), pp. 61-62. Fateh Ali Gurdezi, Tazkirah-Rekhta Goyan (Teen Tazkireh) p. 62. Lachminarayan 'Shafique' and 'Saheb' Chamanistan-e-Shaura (Teen Tazkireh) p. 46, Zikr, p. 72.

2. Nikat-us-Shaura, p. 62.

3. Qayam-uddin 'Qaim; Makhzan-e Nikat, p. 62.

4. Ibid.

30. Mahanarayan :

In his autobiography, Mir has just said that Mahanarayan was the Diwan of Nawab ~~W~~azir Safdarjang and it was he, who gave some munificence to Mir, when he needed it, after the murder of his patron Javed Khan in 1752 A.D.¹

31. Muhammad Ali Rohilla :

Muhammad Ali was the son of a Hindu Ahir and was adopted by Daud Khan, a Ruhela military adventurer. He succeeded his father in 1794, to his jagir of Rampur. He had a fund of bravery and capacity which rendered him worthy of command. A multitude of Afghans flocked to him from all parts and looked upon him as their leader.

Muhammad Ali soon built up a fairly large estate in Barielly district, with its capital at Aonla. The dawn of his fortune was the defeat and plunder of Muhammad Salih, a eunuch of the imperial court, who had been given a lease of villages usurped by Ali Muhammad, 1727 A.D.²

1. Zikr, p. 73.

2. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 195. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 47.

After this success he ordered every body to address him¹ as 'Nawab'.

Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739 A.D. weakened the Delhi government and presented an opportunity for Ali Muhammad for the expansion of his territory. He was not slow to seize the opportunity. He extended his power upto² Bareilly, parts^{of} Moradabad and Hardoi. His ambitious character is reflected by his act of setting up the magnificent tents of red colour, like those of kings of India.

Under Ali Muhammad Rohilla, the Rohillas enjoyed the fruits of each victory, for there was hardly any expedition in which Ali Muhammad suffered a set back. Besides, it was the knack of Muhammad Ali to handle the situation so beautifully that he became highly esteemed all over the country and rose to be one of the leading powers of the times.

1. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 865
Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 49.
2. Ma'asir-ul- Umara, Vol. I, p. 196.

32. Moin-ul-Mulk :

Moin-ul-Mulk's real name was Mir Manu. He was the son of Qamar-uddin Khan Itmad-ud-daula, the third wazir of Muhammad Shah. Mir Manu came to prominence only after his father's death in the battle of Sirhind against Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1748 A.D. He displayed great valour and was successful in driving the Afghan hordes back to their country. His bravery won for him the title of Moin-ul Mulk¹ and Rustam-i-Hind² and he was appointed the governor of Lahore and Multan.

In 1752 A.D. when Ahmad Shah Abdali attacked Lahore Moin-ul-Mulk had to surrender as a result of differences among his own servants. He entered the service of Shah, who made him his own naib³ of Lahore. But just a year after his appointment he died.

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1. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 490.
 2. According to J.N. Sarkar, the appointment was as Governor of Lahore, and that Moin-ul-Mulk later conquered Multan from Shahnawaz Khan, who had been appointed Subedar in 1749. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p.233
 3. He was on a hunting expedition, when suddenly he developed a pain in his belly and died. Sivari-ul-Mutakhirin, Vol. III, p. 895, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p.233

33. Murtaza Khan Mukhtar-ud-daula :

He was a Saiyyad, who on the accession of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula, to the masnad of Lucknow, was appointed chief-minister or deputy with the title of Mukhtar-ud-daula.

But his extra ordinary influence over the nawab, was resented by a number of nobles. This jealousy proved disastrous for him. Basant Ali Khan, Khwaja Sarai, of the times of Nawab Shuja-ud-daula resolved to remove him. He invited Mukhtar-ud-daula for an entertainment and murdered him¹ in 1776 A.D./ 1190 A.H.

Mir hasw ritten about the murder of Mukhtar-ud-daula but has simply given the name of the murderer, of course giving the cause of his murder, though not in very clear terms.

34. Mirza Muhammad Shafi :

Mirza Muhammad Shafi was the nephew's son of Mirza Najaf, the Mir bakshi. Throughout Najaf's life time he had filled in subordinate posts because of his extreme youth.

1. Zikr, p. 136, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 281.

Thus at the time of his uncle's death he had neither acquired the force nor the prestige requisite for a Mir-bakshi¹. But by 1782 A.D., he acquired such power that the Emperor recognised him as the Mir Bakshi and conferred, the title of 'Nasir-ud-daulah Zulfiqar Jang' and at the same time appointed him as the Supreme regent and subedar of Agra.

He bore a frank and unsuspecting character, but his frankness took him nowhere, in that world of intrigue, treachery and violence. He, thus, resorted to bungling in dealing with his rivals. For a time he was successful, but his period of enjoyment was short. Hardly a year had passed when he was skillfully murdered by his rival Muhammad Beg Hamadani in 1783 A.D.²

35. Najib-ud-daula :

Najib-ud-daula, an Umr-khel Afghan, was a domineering personality in Indian history. He migrated to India in a mature age, at a time when his uncle Basharat Khan, was

1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 160.

2. Zikr, p. 137; for details of the murder see Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 185.

in service of Ali Muhammad Rohilla. He started his career as a Jamadar but in due course he rose to hold the reigns of Delhi government and to guide the fortunes of the ¹ Empire for about a decade.

Najib's ability and his strength of character are the two outstanding qualities which contributed to his successful career. A study of his career clearly brings out, that it was his strong and determined will which ² helped him to rise to power. When a contest was going on between Ghaziuddin Khan, Imad-ul-Mulk and Abul Mansur Khan, he served under Ghaziuddin Khan and by frequently ³ attending the royal durbar improved his bearings. After his successful campaign against the rebel wazir Safdarjang, he received the title of 'Najib-ud-daula' by Emperor ⁴ Ahmad Shah in 1755. A.D.

He was created an Amir-ul-Umara to emperor Alamgir ⁵ II, by Ahmad Shah Abdali, on his return to Qandhar in 1757.

1. Dictator of Delhi from 1760 to 1771.
2. Imad-us-Sa'adat, p. 72.
3. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, pp. 371-72.
4. Muhammad Abdus Salam Khan, Sarguzasht Nawab Najib-ud-daula, p. 21.
5. Zikr, p. 77 ; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 298, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 289. For details of Nabib's career see J.N. Sarkar's article 'The Rise of Najib-ud-daula', Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. IX, p. 865.

He also took an active part in the Battle of Panipat in 1761 A.D. and this time he was entrusted with the care of the city of Delhi. He governed Delhi for a decade,¹ till his death in October 1771 A.D. He was buried at Najibabad, a city founded by him.

37. Najaf Khan :

Najaf Khan was a Persian, whose mother belonged² to the Royal house of Safavids. In his infancy he was made a prisoner of the usurper Nadir Shah and was released in 1746 A.D. He had migrated to India and for the first time he served under Muhammad Quli Khan, who was the Giladar of Allahabad fort. When the Allahabad fort was captured by Shuja-ud-daula in 1761, Najaf Khan made for Bengal, where he was enlisted to raise a force for Nawab Mir Qasim. Najaf took up employment under the princes of Bundelkhand, when Mir Qasim fled.

Najaf Khan took up services from one prince to another, for he was an ambitious man. Upon Shuja's flight from Allahabad, in the Battle of Buxar 1764 A.D., he

1. Ma'asir-ul Umara, Vol. II, p. 373.

2. Imad-us-Sa'adat, p. 108-109, Siyar-ul Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 317.

offered his services to English. He accompanied the Emperor Shah Alam to Delhi in 1771 A.D. and having recovered Agra from Jats, he was appointed Amir-ul Umara¹ with the title of 'Zulfigar-ud-daula'.

Mir has noted that his influence in the court was such that the darbar was held only when he attended it, otherwise the emperor was busy wasting time with his ² Sychophants. But Najaf could not carry on for long, as in his poetic expression. Mir describes Delhi as a place of wonder. He was tempted to a life of luxury, spent most of his time in the company of women. At last he died of Tuberculosis in 1782 A.D. Despite a number of physicians attending to him, he could not be cured. He wanted to live and during his last days, Mir has recorded his only wish ³ was to live.

39. Nizam-ul Mulk :

Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, was the grandson of Asaf Jah I. Mir, has not given any details about his career but

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1. Imad-us-Sa'adat, pp.108-109. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II. p. 29.
 2. Zikr, p. 138.
 3. Op.cit. Ibid.

while referring to the appointment of Safdarjang as a
Wazir Nizam-ul-Mulk died in the Deccan.¹ This point makes
it clear that Nizam-ul Mulk died in 1748 A.D. when Safdar-
jang was appointed the Wazir.

40. Nawal Singh :

The Jat raja of Bharatpur, who succeeded his brother
Rao Ratan Singh, after the death of Kheri Singh, his nephew
in the year 1769 A.D.² Mir has observed that the rivalry
among the Jat Rajas was growing intense and in time, it
grew to such an extent that Nawal Singh and his younger
brother Ranjit Singh, who was incharge of the fort of
Kumbher, fought an armed battle, which continued for about
fifteen days. Nawal Singh had to come to terms, as he was
not successful in subdueing him.

Mir has put in his own observation, that though
peace was made the two brothers were not at ease with
each other.³ Nawal Singh died in 1776 A.D., at the time,

1. Zikr, p. 70. For details see Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol.II,
P. 409-417 Khazana-e-Amira, P. 35-45

2. Zikr, p. 118.

3. Ibid., p. 119.

when the fort of Dig was beseiged by Najaf Khan. He was succeeded by Ranjit Singh his nephew, son of Kheri Singh, the son of Suraj Mal Jat.¹

41. Najaf Quli Khan :

Najaf Quli Khan was a Persian named after his patron Mirza Najaf Khan. He lacked true generalship and the power of farsighted scheming. In diplomacy and intrigue, he was rather amateur and became a tool in the hands of shrewder men.

After Najaf Khan's death there was a contest for power among the favourite slaves of Najaf Khan. Najaf Quli Khan also a competitor for power, but unfortunately he was no match for the artful Mirza Shafi, who captured and imprisoned him.²

42. Prithvi Singh :

Raja Prithvi Singh was the son of Madho Singh Kachwaha, Raja of Jaipur. He succeeded his father in

1. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 299.

2. Zikr, p. 199; Sivār-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 955
Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 1.

1768 A.D. and ruled for about a decade (7th March 1768, to 16th April 1778). This decade was a period of tumult¹ and disruption in the annals of that land.

Raja Nagar Mal alongwith, about a hundred families migrated to take refuge at Jaipur in Prithvi Singh's court, in order to save himself from the Jats. Mir was also among the immigrants as he was in Raja Nagarmal's employment at that time.²

43. Qamar-uddin Khan :

Qamar-ud-din Bahadur's original name was Mir Muhammad Fadil, he was the son of Muhammad Amir Khan,³ It was only in the end of Aurangzeb's reign that he obtained a suitable rank and was granted the title of Qamar-ud-din Khan.

In 1719 A.D. i.e., in the first year of Muhammad Shah's reign Qamar-ud-din displayed the valour and received the office of IInd Bakhshi. Later on, on the

1. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 224.

2. Zikr, p. 120.

3. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 488.

resignation of his father, the post of Darogah of Ghusalkhana, was given to him in addition to his charge of Ahadis¹. He was the 3rd wazir of Muhammad Shah's reign and was entitled Imad-ud-daula. He held the supreme office¹ for about a quarter of a century (1724-1748 A.D.).

Prof. Sarkar is of the opinion that he was not a very able and efficient administrator, which is evident from his remark, "the administration merely drifted along under this harmless old man In fact, he considered it supreme wisdom merely to keep his post and do as little³ work as possible. But during his office he took part in many battles and emerged victorious. And it was one of the battles, which ultimately put his life to an end. While he was sitting in his tent, busy in the morning prayers, a canon ball from the opposite side mortally wounded⁴ him.

1. Op.cit., p. 489.

2. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 11.

3. Op.cit.

4. Zikr, p. 68, Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 491. He was killed in a tent while saying his prayers on march 11, 1748 A.D., Elliot, History of India, Vol. VIII, p. 108; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 223. Sivax-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 875. Khazana-e-Amra, p. 98

Q. 3. 1
P. 4. 1

In his personal life, he was a lover of comfort and had a pleasant disposition and was acceptable to high and low.

44. Qasim Ali Khan or Mir Qasim :

Qasim Ali Khan, commonly called Mir Qasim, was the son of Mir Jafar Ali, the Nawab of Bengal. Though he was raised to the masnad of Bengal by the English in 1760 A.D., yet he, in the later years of his government actuated by a keen resentment against the English for their extensive encroachment on his authority and the commerce of his country decided to throw off their yolk and destroy their growing power in Bengal. But he failed in his mission because of the betrayal of his own men. In Mir's opinion the cause of his own men turning against him was that they had lost all patience to bear ¹any further his oppression and cruelty.

He fled to Patna ~~with~~ and from there proceeded to the Nawab of Awadh with his treasures and remanants of his army.

1. Zikr, p. 104-105 ; An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 315. Sirar-ul-Mutakherin, p.

Q. 3. 1
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The Nawab Wazir Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to shelter him but bluffed him by seizing his treasure and plundered him (Mir Qasim). In the celebrated Battle of Buxar (1764 A.D.), he was completely routed. From now on he lived as a fugitive. At last he tried his fortune in the service of Emperor Shah Alam II, in 1779 A.D., but was disappointed. He died in 1777 A.D. at Kotwal, an obscure village at ¹Delhi.

45. Qaim Khan :

Qaim Khan was the eldest son of Muhammad Khan Bangash. He succeeded his father without any opposition. Most of Qaim Khan's time was spent in war with the Afghans. His natural enemy was Safdarjang, the new wazir of Emperor Ahmad Shah. The famous Battle of Danur took place between the Afghans and the Rohillas. Qaim Khan lost his life in ²the battle.

Safdarjang got a good opportunity to enrich himself. He revived the obsolete Mughal practice of escheating ~~the~~

1. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 315.
2. Imad-us-Sadat, p. 45; District Gazetteer of the United Provinces of Farrukhabad, Vol. IX, pp. 138-139.
Zikr, p. 71.

the property of dead nobles and induced the Emperor to order the attachment of Qaim's wealth and lands and there¹ was no one to defend them. But he was defeated in the Battle of Ram Chatauni 1749 A.D. by Ahmad Khan Bangash,² the younger brother of Qaim Khan. But still the wazir did not give up hope, he tried for a second time and this time he brought the Afghan chief to his knees.

Mir was an eye-witness to this contest between Afghans and Rohillas. He passed that way with Ishaq Khan³ Najm-ud-daula.

46. Riyat Khan :

Riyat Khan, son of Azimullah, grandson of Itimad-ud-daula Qamar-ud-din Khan. Riyat Khan was Mir's patron. Mir is all praise for him. He, seeing Mir in distress immediately provided a stipend for him. Thus Mir, was for sometime freed from the cares of finding ways and means⁴ to earn his livelihood.

1. Zikr, p. 71; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, p. 240.

2. Ibid. ; Siyar-ul-Mutakherin , Vol. III, p875; Imad-us-Saadat, p. 49. Khazana-i-Amra, pp. 81-83. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I, pp. 246.47.

3. Zikr, p. 71.

4. Ibid., p. 67; Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, pp. 608-109.

47. Raja Jai Singh :

Raja Jai Singh belonged to the Kachwaha clan of Rajputs. He was the son of Bishan Singh, the zamindar of Amber in Malwa. Alamgir had bestowed on him the title of 'Raja'. In the reign of Farrukhsiyar, he was honoured with the title of 'Dhiraj Raja' and during the reign of Muhammad¹ Shah with that of 'Sawai', (exceptional).

In 1732 he got the governorship of Malwa. He had a passion for the development of science and was a great patron of art and literature. He built five observatories for astronomical studies, ~~namely~~^{at} Delhi, Benaras, Mathura, Ujjain and Jaipur, and a published work on astronomy called 'Zij Muhammad Shahi'. He also built a caravan Sarai in every province of Hindustan for the convenience of travellers. He died in 1743 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Ishwari Singh,² whereas Mir has recorded that Madho Singh was his son. Mir has mentioned the name of Raja Jai Singh in connection with the ancestry of Madho Singh, the

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1. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 193.
 2. Zikr, p. 116. For details of Raja Jai Singh Sawai see Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 735-736, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 193.

principal figure of the account; beyond this brief reference no other fact has been recorded to give details about his life.

48. Raja Jugal Kishore :

Raja Jugal Kishore was the wakil of Bengal in the Mughal court during the reign of Muhammad Shah. Mir has said nothing more about the Raja except that he too was fond of urdu poetry and frequently got his verses corrected by the great poet. Thus Raja Jugal Kishore was also one of the patrons of Mir.

49. Raja Nagar Mal :

Raja Nagar Mal was an Imperial Mutasaddi, and a Diwan of Khalsa and Tan during the reign of Muhammad Shah. He had enjoyed honours under Muhammad Shah, Ahmad Shah and Alamgir II. ² Muhammad Shah had conferred the title of

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1. Zikr, p. 75. He was a Bhat by caste. He was an agent at Delhi of Mahabat Jang, Subedar of Bengal and was employed by Safdarjang to carry out the resumption of Farrukhabad territory after the death of Qaim Khan. W. Irwine, 'The Bangash Nawabs of Oudh', Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 48 (1839), p. 133.
 2. Zikr, p. 75. J.N. Sarkar, An Original Account of Ahmad Shah Durrani Campaign In India, Islamic Culture, 1933, p. 455.

'Umadt ul Mulk and 'Maharaja' on him.

Mir has praised him for his generosity but adds that this quality of his alienated many people in the court and they turned against him such that he had to come well armed and guarded to attend the court. He was¹ Mir's patron for about fifteen years and Mir left him because a clash on principles had developed between them.

50. Ranjit Singh :

He was the Jat Raja of Bharatpur son of Kheri Singh, son of Suraj Mal Jat. He succeeded his uncle Raja Nawab Singh in 1776 A.D. He was the younger brother of Nawal Singh and Mir has mentioned his name in the context of the War of Succession among the Jats after the death of Raja Jawahir Singh. He was the nephew of Jawahir Singh.

51. Rao Ratan Singh :

Rao Ratan Singh was the brother of Jawahir Singh, son of Suraj Mal Jat. He succeeded Jawahir Singh. He was most of the time doped and drunk. In the ten months of his reign, there was not a cruelty, which he did not inflict

1, Zikr, p. 75.

on public. The innocent and guilty were treated alike. Thus he could not carry on for long and was stabbed by a fagir named Rupanand, who pretended to transmute copper¹ into gold.

52. Shahnawaz Khan :

Shahnawaz Khan Samsam-ud-daula, was the descendant of Sadat Kwaf of Khurasan. His family had migrated to Hindustan in the reign of Akbar. He was born on 10th March 1700 A.D., at Lahore but settled at Aurangabad at an early age². He held the Subedari of Lahore and fled from Lahore on the arrival of Ahmad Shah Abdali³. He was murdered in the confusion, when Bussy, the French general was assassinated.

53. Safdarjang :

Safdarjang, whose original name was Mirza Muqim and surname Mansur Ali Khan, was the son of Sayadat Khan

1. Zikr, p. 118.
2. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 366.
3. Zikr, p. 68, for details see Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 868 ; An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 366.

and nephew and son-in-law of Burhan-ul-Mulk Sa'adat Khan, whom he succeeded in the government of Awadh. He was appointed wazir in 1748 A.D., on the accession of Ahmad¹ Shah and he exercised his authority over the whole imperial administration for several years. He was however dismissed after few years in service.

54. Sa'adat Khan :

Sa'adat Khan styled Burhan-ul-Mulk, whose former name was Muhammad Amin Khan, was originally a merchant of Khurasan. He was the progenitor of the Nawabs and² Kings of Awadh. His father Nasir Khan, came to India during Bahadur Shah's reign.

At the commencement of the Emperor Muhammad Shah's reign he held the faujdari of Bayana and was appointed the governor of Awadh in 1724 A.D. with the title of 'Saadat Khan', in place of Girdhar Bahadur. He received the title of Burhan-ul-Mulk and was present in the battle with Nadir

1. Zikr, pp. 68-69. For details see Ma'asir-ul-Umara tr. Beveridge Vol. I, pp. 137-40 and A.L. Srivastava, First Two Nawabs of Awadh, p. 123, Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 868.

2. For details see First Two Nawabs of Awadh, p. 1-20

¹
Shah, died on the night previous to massacre of Delhi
on 9th March 1739.

55. Shuja-ud-Daula :

He was the son of Abul Mansur Khan and his real name was Mirza Jalal-uddin Haider. After his father's ² death, he was appointed governor of Awadh and Allahabad.

Dr. A.L. Srivastava holds the view that the headship of the Imperial artillery proved the stepping stone to still higher honour for Shuja-ud-daula. Just a few years after taking the charge Shuja-ud-daula had to face Imad-ul Mulk, the wazir, Then came the real test of Sujas' insight in 1759 A.D., when the Marathas on one hand and the Durranis on the other tried to win him over to his side. He finally decided to throw in his lot with the Afghans. Neutrality had hardly any place in Shuja-ud-daula's mental make up, unless he was prevented by circumstances over which he had little control. He would always take sides in quarrel or controversy that concerned him directly

1. Zikr, p. 69.

2. Ibid., p. 74.

or indirectly. This may be proved by the roles he played in the battle of Panipat, 1761 A.D. and Buxur gave a death blow to his prestige.

He had a mastery over Persian, Turki and Arabic¹ languages. Besides, he had been trained in nearly all the traditional arts², which were generally taught to the nobles in those days. He was brave and warlike and preferred the life of camp to the comforts and luxuries provided within the walks of his palace. He curbed the power of local zamindars and other turbulent elements in Awadh by launching campaign against them. He also inflicted a defeat on Marathas at Jalesqr in 1734-1735.³

56. Suraj Mal :

Raja of Bharatpur was the son of Badan Singh, whom he succeeded in 1750 A.D. His Younger brother Pratap Singh built fort of Kumbher. After the departure of Ahmad Shah

1. Quoted in Hastings and the Rohilla War by Sir John Strachey 93 n. vide A.L. Srivastava Shuja-ud-daula, Vol. I, p. 3.
2. Swimming, wrestling, riding, archery, shooting, lance fighting. He was adept in the art of archery and lance flighting, Harcharan, 578 a and b. vide A.L. Srivastava, Shuja-ud-daula, Vol. I, p. 3.
3. Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. III, p. 895; An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 393. Ma'asir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 912.

Abdali from India to Qandhar, Suraj Mal, taking advantage of the weakness of the Empire made himself the master¹ of all the countries around Agra. He fell in a battle with Rohilla² chief Najib-ud-daula in December 1763 A.D.

57. Taimur Shah :

He was the eldest son of Ahmad Shah Abdali. He succeeded his father to the throne of Kabul and Qandhar in 1772 A.D. after murdering Shah Wali Khan, his father's³ wasir, who intended to crown his son-in-law. Ahmad Shah had left him at Delhi as the regent and married him to the daughter of Muhammad Shah. He reigned for twenty years and died in 1793 A.D.

58. Yakub Ali Khan :

Yakub Ali Khan was an agent of Ahmad Shah Abdali. He was sent by Abdali in 1761 A.D. to conclude peace with Marathas and Jats.

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1. Zikr, p. 102. Suraj Mal was a Jat noble whose ancestors held a respectable post throughout the Mughal period. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Mughal nobles, rebelled in 1763 A.D. and confiscated the fort of Agra. Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, pp. 324-325.
 2. Zikr, p. 109.
 3. An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 397.

59. Zain Khan :

He was the son of Khwaja Maksud of Herat. He held the mansabdari of 4500, and was afterwards promoted to the mansabdari of 5000. Ahmad Shah Abdali while returning back in 1761 A.D. appointed him, who was one of his own clansman as the Subedar of Sarhind.¹ He was an accomplished soldier and and a literary man. He died from the effects of drinks in 1010 A.H/² 1763 A.D.

60. Zabita Khan :

Zabita Khan was a Rohilla chief, son of Najib-ud-daula, Amir ul-Umara. After the death of his father in 1770 A.D., he continued to protect the royal family till the return of the emperor Shah Alam in 1771 A.D., when he was convicted of having been deficient in respect to the royal authority, while the emperor resided in Allahabad. His territories were seized. He made an escape to Nawab Shuja-ud-daula.

1. Zikr, p.100 Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, pp. 345-46.

2. Ibid., p. 360, An Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 425.

But later on he got back the rank of Amir-ul-Umara at the recommendation of Marathas. He died in 1785 A.D. He was the father of the traitor Ghulam Qadir Khan, who subsequently blinded the Emperor Shah Alam.¹

1. Zikr, p. 150
Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III, p. 310

CHAPTER - V

ZIKR-I-MIR AS A SOURCE FOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE PERIOD

The literature that appeared during the eighteenth century represented the attitudes, perceptions and ideals of the people as well as their state of life and social surroundings. The effects of the political instability and economic ruin caused by the collapse of the old order had direct impact on the social and cultural institutions of the society, transforming the whole psychic of the people involved in their functions. These changes are evidently reflected in historical and literary works of the period; the writers and poets have faithfully registered the reactions and tendencies of all those who had experienced the reactions and tendencies of the upheavals. Thus the history of the eighteenth century is characterized by the foreign invasions, the civil wars among different groups of the local nobles and zamindars, and regional powers -- like Jats, Marathas and Rohillas. All these combined had far reaching effects on society and culture of the period.

Mir Taqi Mir, has provided us with a fairly good picture of society and culture of the period in his autobiography.

The eighteenth century society was composed mainly of the three classes, the upper class, middle class and lower class. The upper class forming only a minority group was wealthy and extravagant in their way of life, and included such influential elements as the Rajas, chiefs, jagirdars, landlords and officials. Next in the social orders stood the middle class, that was larger in number and size and comprised of small professional people, merchants, traders, clerks and soldiers.

As Mir was patronized by most of the nobles, and leading ¹zamindars of the time, his autobiography is largely replete with details pertaining to the social and cultural conditions prevailing in the upper strata of society.

General Characteristics of the Nobility of the Eighteenth Century :

Political morality was at its' lowest ebb. Mean intrigues and treacherous conspiracies were main instruments which the nobles employed to grasp and retain the

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1. Zikr, p. 62, Samsam-ud-daula, the Mir bakshi of Muhammad Shah's reign, Nawab Bahadur the all powerful Khwaja Sara of Ahmad Shah, Raja Nagar Mal, who held the post of Diwan-i Tan and Khalisa during Muhammad Shah's reign, Raja Jugal Kishore the wakil of Bengal during Muhammad Shah's reign. Zikr, p. 75, Besides this for a list of his patrons see Supra, pp. 180-83.

levers of power, If the record of the roles and deeds of these self-seeking nobles is surveyed right from the beginning of Muhammad Shah's reign i.e. 1719-1748, the palace revolutions and coup'd'etats appear to have been organized by factions of nobles to usurp as much sovereign powers as they could. In their unscrupulous pursuit of power no fear of evil consequences on the fortunes of the empire stopped them from resorting to cold blooded murder and total liquidation of their rivals. The murders of Amir Khan¹ and Javed Khan² may be cited as positive evidence to this state of degeneration to which the ambitious but short-sighted nobles had sunk. They wanted to reduce the monarch to a position of helplessness and dependence, while keeping to themselves the substance of sovereignty.

The monarchs who ^ast on the throne during this period lacked in strength of character and vision, which were essential to keep such nobles under check and defend the empire against the external aggressions. In consequence of the decline in the personal courage and resources of the kings, the nobles began to dominate them and press them to act according to their wishes.

1. Zikr, p. 73.

2. Ibid., p. 69.

Mir has quoted a number of such examples, which brings out the weaknesses of the Mughal Emperors. For example - the murders of Alamgir II and Intizam-ud-daula.¹ It was the doing of Imda-ul-Mulk, the Wazir, who got the puppet king murdered on 29 November 1759 and also his rival Intizam-ud-daula strangled on the following day. Thus the main ambition of these nobles was to rule over the remaining parts of the empire in the name of the king by keeping him in perpetual state of abject helplessness. They checked all his attempts to recover his lost power. They surrounded him with their own creatures with a view to keep an eye on his every action. The crown was now like a tool in the hands of the powerful nobles, who were free to use it in any way they wanted.

Economic Conditions:

As in the sphere of politics, so in the field of economic activities the eighteenth century witnessed far reaching changes. During this period the royal treasury was virtually emptied and no sufficient amount of money was left even to meet the daily expenses of the royal kitchen. Starvation stared in their faces. The soldiers

1. Zikr, p. 81.

and servants posted in and out of the palace had not received the salaries for months together, whatever wealth, jewellery and precious articles had been left out in its vaults by Nadir Shah were completely plundered by Ahmad Shah, the Marathas and Ghulam Qadir Rohilla. A clean sweep of the royal karkhanas was made by these plunderers. While the accumulated wealth was thus drained out, no money flowed in ~~from~~^{from} any source. The resultant bankruptcy always held the monarch back from achieving anything in the directions either of civil administration or military campaigns. He came to depend heavily on the nobles and governors for his personal and state expenses, as they alone possessed the whole treasure their agents collected from the fields and markets in the administered territories. The frequent foreign invasions¹ and constant internal disturbances² retarded the growth of agriculture and industry, but production in these sectors did not decline to an alarming extent. A careful perusal of the contemporary source material will show that trade and commerce continued to flourish in the towns and villages which had not been affected by these tragic events.

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1. The Invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali from 1748 A.D. - 1769 A.D.
 2. The Rohilla wars, the Jat-Maratha contest, the fractional feuds among the Jats after the death of Raja Suraj Mal 1763 A.D.^{and} The Marathas quest for power in the north.

Economic Conditions of the Emperors and Nobles:

Zikr-i Mir does not supply adequate information regarding the economic condition of the different classes of people, because it mainly deals with the political events. For this reason it is difficult to form any assumptions or suggestions in respect of the economic life of the people during the reign of Muhammad Shah. Search for employment by Mir after the death of his patron in the battle of Karnal does indicate the fact that he was one of those thousand persons who had been rendered jobless by the invasion of Nadir Shah.¹

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1. Nadir Shah took away vast treasure from India. The Imperial treasury and the Amirs houses were literally emptied. W. Irvine, Later Mughals, p. 370.
Chahar Gulzar-i Shujai (Rotograph), p. 305.

The cause of economic depression in the eighteenth century was the growing weakness of the central administration as a result of which the provincial governors kept larger portion of revenue for themselves and remitted only a small portion of it to the central government. After Nadir Shah's invasion the regional powers became more independent and strong such that by the reign of Shah Alam II major portion of the Khalisa lands was under the provinces and Shah Alam's dominion had shrunk to such an extent that a phrase 'Hz Delhi Ja Palam' was used to give its extent. Tarikh-i-Chahar Gulshan-i Muhammad Shahi (MS.) AMU, pp. 24-25b. Also Francklin's History of Reign of Shah Alam.

The reign of Ahmad Shah, 1748 A.D. to 1756 A.D. was marked by the invasions of Abdali Shah, the rebellion of Safdarjang, the plunder of Delhi by the Jats, the Marathas and the Afghans, and the deposition of the king. The members of the harem were looted. All the jewellery of Malika-i-Zamani was seized¹. All these events had an adverse effect on the financial stability of the state.² Even the nobles and the royal family were reduced to a state of object penury.

1. Zikr, p. 72.

The economy of the state had been completely shattered, the princes had to go without food for several days according to Tarikh-i Shakir Khani (Rotograph), p. 36. Describing the state of the nobles and the imperial family Mir says:-

اس کے اوپر ہے شہ شائی اور چاہے ہے خرچ بالائی
 ہر طرف پھیلی ہے یہ رسوائی کل چناچہ ہمیں نظر آئی
 لال خیمے کے گرد سرپال جو دکھ چاہے زمانہ
 دینے کا ہو کہیں ٹھکانا بھی کعبہ ہوتا ہے پینا لکانا بھی
 پاں نہیں شہ کے گھر میں دانا بھی ورنہ ہو کے رہے ہیں بیٹھے نہ حال

Mir Taqi Mir, Kulliyat-i Mir, p. 58.

2. Once during the reign of Ahmad Shah the Imperial treasury was so drained out that Ahmad Shah had to pay the soldiers by selling the utensils of royal kitchen. Shakir Khan Bin Shams-ud-daula, Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani (Rotography), A.M.U., p. 37.

During the reign of Alamgir II, Delhi and Agra had been so thoroughly sacked by the invaders that, according to Mir, the old families were completely ruined. He writes, "the men who had once enjoyed the luxuries of life were now reduced to such straits that they longed for a drop of water. Nawabs were turned paupers¹."

Shah Alam's reign was no better from the economic point of view. The economic conditions of his kingdom had deteriorated to such low level that he ultimately became a pensioner of the English.

1. Zikr, p. 76.

For a detailed account of the immense booty which the Afghan king collected from the rich nobles and zamindars, see, Khazana-i-Amirah, pp. 99-100. Ganda Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani, pp. 165-167; Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 93.

2. Mir in his Kulliyat has gone to the extent of saying that the emperor was not in a state of affording even eight annas. This he has expressed in a couplet-

آٹھ آنے ہیں شاہ پر باری اس کی لوگوں نے کی ہے اب خواری
آپ ہیں تو یہ ہے گرفتاری فوج ہے گی تو قحط کی ماری
کیوں نہ جس جا رہے ہیں وہاں تما کال

Kulliyat-i-Mir, p. 957.

According to Spears, the Royal Princes were left to die of hunger but were not given employment as this would be against their royal prestige, Twilight of the Mughals, pp. 62-63.

Yet it is a paradox that despite the deteriorating economic conditions of the empire the upper class, which formed only a small part of the population still owned vast fortunes and properties. They passed their days in security and comforts. As an instance of this luxurious and extravagant ways of life Mir has cited the case of the grand reception accorded to the English governor at the court of Awadh in 1784. The vast preparations made for it, the varieties of the dishes, the lavish use of the perfumes, the setting up of the camps at various stages all along the route to welcome the distinguished guest, show the magnitude of wealth which the nawabs of Awadh kept.¹

Economic Condition of General Public:

While the wealthy class enjoyed the luxuries of life, the artisans, poets, soldiers, scholars wandered from place to place in search of employment.² Mir's autobiography is rather a diary, which gives a complete records of the wanderings of Mir in search of employment.

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1. Zikr, p. 143. A number of historical sources also bear a testimony to the extravagance of the upper class and in Azad Bilgrami's opinion, it was in fact one of the reasons of ruin of the amirs and noble, for this life of ease and comfort marred their power of reasoning and logical thinking, Khazana-i Amirah, p. 49.
 2. The 'Shahr-e-Ashob' of Mir, Sauda, Qaim Chandpuri, the poets of 18th century give a fairly good account of the picture of the conditions of people making allowances for poetic licence.

According to him, after almost every invasion of Abdali, and every war, he had to go out in search of employment. For instance immediately after the first invasion of Abdali in 1748, he went to ¹Delhi. He was patronized by Nawab Bahadur.

Social Conditions:

Society was composed of people belonging to different professions and callings. From the account given by Mir, one can safely conclude that communal harmony existed during the period between the Hindus and Muslims. Though of course the statement cannot be generalised for the whole society as Mir has dealt mostly with the nobles and zamindars. Mir spent a greater part of his life with his Hindu patrons, the foremost among them being Raja ²Nagar Mal, in whose company he spent nearly fifteen years. Raja Jugal Kishore was another important Amir who had finally supported Mir Taqi Mir and the petty work assigned to the poet was to correct the poems which the Raja composed. But Mir says that correction of his composition

1. Zikr, p. 72, Supra, p.

2. از مدته به سبب افراط تفریط روزگار نایبجار همراه ناگزیر مل که دیوان
تن و ذیل بادشاهی بود.

was beyond his attempt. Nevertheless, Mir's relations with his patron always remained cordial and it was at his recommendation that he later on acquired¹ job under Raja Nagarmal. Similarly he has² praised his other non-Muslim patrons like Bahadur Singh and Bishan Singh who showed him great regard and respect. Thus it shows that till Mir's time there was a complete harmony between the Hindus and Muslims though of course there were many a battles between the Mughals and Rajas and feudatory chiefs⁴ but never on the issue of religion.

1. Zikr, p. 75.

روز سوار شده بخانه راجه ناگرمال رفت و تقریب من کرده طلب داشت -

Ibid., p. 87.

2. Ibid., p. 91.

3. Ibid., p. 93.

4. During the long period from the appointment of Saadat Khan to Awadh in 1772 to the death of Shuja-ud-daula in 1775 there is on record only one incident of religious bigotry which disturbed harmony in Benaras. But the trouble remained confined to Benaras and was nipped in the bud. There is no record of any other tension. A.L. Srivastava, Shuja-ud-daula, Vol. II, p. 365.

Another example of mutual tolerance and good will among the Muslims and Hindus of the period is that Najib-ud-daula, the Pathan chief had built big houses at Hardwar for the convenience and comfort of Hindu pilgrims.

Religious Beliefs And Practices:

Mir has described some events which clearly depict that the Mussalmans worshipped relics, revered tombs and adored saints and all kinds of religious ⁿmedicants. The circumstances in which the murder of Alamgir II took place proves beyond doubt that he had faith in the miracles of the saints. He was easily lured by the saint supposed^y possessing occult power which would overcome his difficulties. ² This incident clearly illustrates the belief of a section of Muslims in super^sstition and magic.

Another example of the belief in those supernatural powers prevalent among the Muslim nobles was the dream of Najib-ud-daula which he had seen before taking final ³ decision to attack the Jats. From this dream he was convinced that his victory over the Jat Raja was certain and so resolved to launch an offensive with full vigour on the following day.

1. Zikr, p. 82.

In Awadh there were a number of Tombs of Muslim saints which were revered by many people from far and near. Mrs. Mir Hasan, Observations on Mussalmans of India, p. 19.

Nawab Asaf-ud-daula himself visited Bahraich, every year on the occasion of Urs of Ghazi Masood Salarjang. Chahar Gulzar-i Shujaee (Rotograph), p. 452.

2. Supra, p. 81.

3. Supra, p. 108.

Participation in Urs ceremonies and visit to tombs of saints also formed an important part of religious faith for these persons. As far as the revering of tomb is concerned Mir was thankful to his Almighty God who afforded him an opportunity to visit the tomb of Khwaja Moin-ud-din Ajmeri.¹ He went to Agra to pay visit to the tomb of his father, whom he regarded as a great mystic and has addressed him as saint,² and his grand-father.

Thus a perusal of Mir's autobiography throws light on the mystic trend among the Muslims which was in vogue those days. Regarding the religious beliefs and practices of Hindus, not much information is available in the work except brief references to a few towns, like Rasana, a few miles from the fort of Kumbher, which according to the author was a pilgrimage centre of the Hindus and the wife of Raja Jugal Kishore on her way to Rasana had helped him in his adversity. He has also referred to Lake Pushkar where the Jat Raja Jawahir Singh had gone to have a holy dip in 1767.³

1. Zikr, p. 69.

2. Ibid., p. 103.

3. Ibid., p. 116.

Amusements :

The means of recreation were many and varied but different for different sections of the society. Mir, has not cared to give a detailed account. He has attended only to the outdoor games of cock-fighting and hunting, in which both the rich and middle class people indulged for amuse-
¹
ment and pastime. In fact Mir had met Nawab Asaf-ud-daula for the first time, when he had come to witness the cock-
²
fighting. He had also accompanied the Nawab twice on his

1. Zikr, p. 139.

2. There is a list of the types and means of recreation which had been created during the eighteenth century. In Awadh it was Pigeon-fighting, cock-fighting, kite flying etc. Cock-fighting, according to Abdul Halim Sharar, date from the time of Nawab Shuja-ud-daula in Awadh. The Royal family, nobles as well as the general public indulged in it. Nawab Saadat Ali Khan, in spite of the fact that he was abstinent, also enjoyed cock-fighting. His interest had a great effect on the society and in addition to the Lucknow nobles Europeans at the court also became its devotees. General Martin was expert at Cock-fighting and Nawab Saadat Ali Khan used to bet his cock against those of General. Lucknow; The Last Phase of Oriental Culture (tr.) E.S. Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain, p. 123.

Mir has composed a masnavi on cock-fighting at Lucknow, which gives a clear picture of the game. Kulliyat-i Mir, pp. 808-810, Also Imad-us-Sadat, p. p. 144.

hunting expeditions and has composed a poem 'Shikarnama'¹ which was much appreciated by the Nawab.

Mir has listed drinks and dishes of fiddarent colours and varieties prepared with skill and care for the dinner that had been arranged on a mighty scale by nawab Shuja-ud-daula in the honour of Warren Hastings on his official visit to Lucknow. His, is the eye-witness account, which throws light on the tastes and food habits of the nawabs in those days and also shows the knowledge of Mir about the delicious but expensive drinks, dishes of meat and different kinds of bread. Mir has given the names of the various types of bread nan-i-Badam, bread prepared from Almond and Bakarkhani in praise of which Mir has said that it was clean and hot like the sun. Nan-i-Jawan was baked with such perfection that it could infuse youthfulness in an old man. He has described the varieties of meat preparation.² The Do-pivaza and various varieties of Kababs, like

1. Zikr, p. 147.

2. Zikr, p. 140.

The art of gastronomy was highly improved by the people of Lucknow. The kitchens of nawabs were excellent and everyday produced the most sumptuous and delicious food for the dinner of ruler. A special art was to produce one particular stuff in several different colours and forms, when placed on the table it looked as if there were scores of different kinds of delicacies, but when one tasted them one found they were all the same.
Lucknow: The Last Phase of Oriental Culture (tr.) p.157.

Kabab-i Gul, Kabab-i-Hind, Kabab-i Qandhari and Kabab-i-Warq was fired with such perfection that it was irresistible. At least ten dishes of every variety were placed before every guest. Besides this Palachio-nut, Almond and European¹ sweetmeats were kept to be served with wine. Such waste of money and time involved in the preparation of these meals, the poor obviously could not afford. The governor was presented with rare and costly gifts like-sword manufactured in the south and west, were presented to him. The palace where he resided was decorated with multi-coloured and embroidered carpets; rose water was sprinkled in every corner of the palace; soft and comfortable beds; perfumed garments; silver painted walls were embellished with curtains and frills. In fact, every details was taken into consideration to make the royal guest as comfortable as possible.²

1. Zikr, p. 143.

2. Ibid., pp. 143-144. According to a European traveller of Eighteenth century it was customary that the respectable guests were received a mile or two in advance and after embracing, which was the proper form of salutation among princes or rulers, both the guests and the host rode together on the same elephant to the palace appointed for the former's residence. At the time of visit, the host advanced to the gate of his audience hall to receive a guest of equal rank, and (itr) rose-water, betel leaves were offered and natch (female dance) was very often arranged for entertainment. It was customary to exchange presents on such occasion, s, which were usually with rich people rarities, such as jewels, wearing apparels watches etc. Hodges, Travels in India (1780-83), p. 116.

This description of the decoration of palace also throws light on the handicrafts for which the place was so famous. Dyeing and printing, embroidery and needle work were to be found in almost every town.

Education And Literature :

Though this period witnessed ^{the} decline of the Mughal power, it was the most glorious period for the development of urdu literature. There was no dearth of scholars, poets and writers of an average capacity. In every capital city a large number of scholars, poets and writers of high quality could be found.

The elite class gave patronage to the poets and men of letters, whether they themselves were educated or not. Thus a horde of poets and literati were to be found in the court of every noble. The poetry served as a status symbol and a means to gain favour at court. The composition and recitation was regarded as a mark of refinement and polished taste. The nobles, therefore showered their patronage abundantly to poets and men of letters. Accordingly Khan-i Dauran sanctioned grant of one rupee per month¹ as stipend to Mir. Muhammad Khan Bangash was also a great

1. Zikr, p. 62; Khazana-i Amirah, p. 246.

patron of art and literature. During his time a number of poets, scholars went to Farrukhabad to seek refuge and patronage. Mir has also mentioned it. Mir's stay at different courts^r throughout his life is a testimony to the fact that the nobles and zamindars of the eighteenth century took it as a pride to offer subsistence to the men of letters. Another form of patronage was to hold Mahfils and Mushairas in their houses where poems were recited and literary discussions took place.

Persian still continued to occupy the place of pride. Being the court language, it served as a medium of polite intercourse and of instruction in Muslim academics where both Muslims and Hindus had their schoolings.

Mir has given a list of the nobles who wrote verses in Persian, like Amir Khan, Raja Jugal Kishore, Safdarjang, Najm-ud-din Ali Salam,¹ About the Mughal Emperors during his period he has kept silent. Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh, though he did not inherit the poetic talent from his ancestors, but he loved poetry and there were some Persian and Urdu scholars at his court. He had employed Khan-i-Arzu, the uncle of Mir who spent most of his life at Faizabad and

1. Supra, pp. 183, 231, 233, 244.

Lucknow and died there in 1169 A.H.¹

Nawab Asaf-ud-daula had a great interest in poetry. He was a man of letters and patronized many poets. His nom-de-plume was Asaf. He had invited Mir to his court and fixed a subsistence of three hundred rupees per month, which continued till Mir's death in 1810.²

Thus Zikr-i Mir is also a source of information for the social and cultural history of Northern India in the period it deals with.

- a glowing tribute in*
1. Zikr, p. 75, Khazana-i Amirah, 116-119. Azad has paid, book Aab-i-Hayat, p. 121, Khan-i-Arzu has done for Urdu what Aristotle did for logic. As long as the logicians are called the descendants of Aristotle, all Urdu writers will also be called the descendants of Khan-i-Arzu.

R.B. Saxena, A History of Urdu Literature, p. 70.
 Ghulam Ali Azad, Ma'asir-ul-Kiram, pp. 227-228.

R E S U M E

Though Zikr-i Mir is a diary of political events yet it furnishes useful and detailed informations ^{ga} ~~re~~rding the author's life that was full of failures and attainments, pains and pleasures, joys and sorrows. His father, a mystic, had deeply influeneed his mind and soul; and his death while Mir was only a lad of eleven years, was a severe blow, rendering him abandoned and forlon^r in this strange wide world. He stood on his own and faced up to the realities of the situation.

When he had attained fame as a poet several men of wealth and influence extended their patronage to him, and Mir has faithfully acknowledged his debt of gratitude for this kind support and sympathy. But Mir never stayed permanently at one place or worked under one patron for which both his sensitive nature and instability of political situation were responsible. He had an inordinate sense of self-respect and so, it was one of the reasons for his frequent change of places and patrons.

Mir was a prolific writer and his literary productions are numerous. He has left the following works to the enjoyment of posterity.

1. Six Collections of Poems or divans
2. Numerous Masnavis.
3. A Pamphlet entitled Faiz-i Mir.
4. A Fakirah entitled Nikat-us-shaura.
5. His autobiography Zikr-i Mir in Persian.

Besides these well-known works there are three masnavis collected together under the title of Shikarnama which deals with the hunting expeditions of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula. A careful study of the above works of Mir depict the nature of Mir in clear terms. Mir's assessment of men and situations is purely subjective and only reflects his own likes and dislikes about them.

Zikr-i Mir was brought to light from oblivion in 1928 by Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu, Aurangabad. But even after this, it was treated for a long time by the literary critics as a piece of Persian literature only, till it was pointed out by Professor K.A. Farooqui in his work 'Mir Ki Hayat aur Shaiyri' that the work was equally important from the historical point of view, besides being a literary masterpiece. A perusal of the work tends to show that the conclusion of Prof. K.A. Farooqui is right, for the autobiography deals with most of the historical events from 1748-1799 i.e. from the first Invasion of Abdali to the blinding of Shah Alam in 1788. Mir has recorded these events in plain and simple language without being unduly biased. Like other contemporary accounts it also contains accounts of devastations and ruins that had continually afflicted the people of Delhi. Mir has given a more vivid account of these miserable scenes of devastations in northern India, for most of the time he had been either in Delhi or Awadh.

As far as the question of its autobiographical importance is concerned there can be no two opinions of it being a fairly good account of Mir, for a good autobiography is one in which the author remains in the background but still a clear picture of his life can be drawn by the readers from the narrative and that is what Zikr-i-Mir is. Though very little space has been devoted by Mir to self-description, yet his miseries and sufferings and misfortunes are clearly reflected in the work.

The notable characteristic of his description of the contemporary events is that he has concentrated on the ruins of Delhi and Agra. After almost every battle and every external aggression he has devoted more space in describing the miseries and sufferings of the affected people.

Secondly, he has mostly dealt with the political history of the three regional powers -- the Marathas, the Jats and the Afghans -- which were engaged in an obstinate struggle for supremacy in North India during the eighteenth century.

Mir had seen the reigns of six Mughal Emperors beginning from Muhammad Shah to Akbar Shah and in his opinion the principal cause of the downfall of the Mughal Empire was the weakness of the later Mughal Emperors.

The Jats who were emerging in the Doab area also fell and their kingdom finally disintegrated. The gradual weakening of their power, after the death of Suraj Mal May also be ascribed to the family feuds on the succession issues and other disputes relating to land and money. Mir has dealt exhaustively about their doings.

The rise and fall of the Marathas in the north have been given a similar treatment specially, the contest of Marathas and Durranis from 1759 to 1761. The main cause of the Marathas' failure against Durranis in the historic battle of Panipat, according to Mir is that had the Marathas kept to their old tactics of warfare they could have succeeded in overpowering their opponents.

Besides these battle, the disposition and blinding of the Mughal Kings did not escape the notice of the author. For instance, events connected with the imprisonment and blinding of Ahmad Shah, murder of Alamgir II and Intizam-ud-daula, the blinding of Shah Alam have been recorded. These events illustrate that the eighteenth century was a period during which the Mughal crown was at the mercy of the powerful nobles and the institution of monarchy had lost completely not only its authority but even its prestige and dignity in the public. Nevertheless, some of these powerful nobles even tried to usurp the

Mughal throne for himself or his family. What prevented any formidable noble from a coup was his own lack of determination to face the opposition by other equally powerful nobles. The nobles and chiefs were not unanimous in finding out an alternative system of government and replace the existing political order by a new one, more stable and more dynamic. Therefore, each noble was interested in preserving the ghost of Mughal monarchy only to exploit it for his own selfish aims.

He has given brief life-sketches of nearly all the nobles, chiefs and zamindars who played any significant role in the march of the events, but dilated more on those with whom he came into contact or who patronised him. But he has refrained from either praising or censuring any one of them. His account is free from bias or prejudice. However the general character of the nobility had become so corrupt and repulsive that Mir could not help criticising their acts of violence, misappropriation and utter negligence of duties. Their outlook was narrow, their aims petty and their methods mean. They were fond of flattery, and their talks were more polite than sincere. They were least concerned with the security of the empire or the welfare of the general public. Thus this development in the character of the nobility of eighteenth century can

be regarded, if not the main at least one of the causes of the decline of the Mughal Empire. Rather, it would'nt be an exaggeration to assert that it accelerated the speed of the decline of the Mughal Empire.

About the social and cultural history of the period Mir has not written much except given a few passing references to some amusements and hunting expeditions of the elite class. Mir himself accompanied Nawab Asaf-ud-daula on two of his hunting expeditions and on these occasions he composed two poems known as 'Shikarnama' which were much appreciated by the nawab.

Thus though Zikr-i Mir cannot be used as a source for social and cultural history of the period on the whole Zikr-i-Mir can be treated as a source for historical information of the period in which it deals, for a complete analysis of Zikr shows that it possesses almost all the informations which a historical record should possess.

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